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The Town-Wall Fortifications of Ireland

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The Town-wall Fortifications of Ireland

FETHARD WALL AND ANTIQUARIAN GROUP.

The Town-wall Fortifications of Ireland

By J. S. FLEMING
F.S.A. (Scot.), M.R.S.A. (Ire.), Etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE.

In making these few sketches of the Town-Wall Fortifications, the product of periodical visits to Ireland extending over many years, the author had no object beyond perhaps contributing an article with the illustrations and notes of the cities which the walls defended to the *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Irish Society of Antiquaries*, of which he has the honour to be a member; but as the sketches accumulated, and no work on this branch of the castellated architecture of Ireland appears to have been published, he ventured to think that the collection with relative notes in book form, would be favourably accepted by the Irish antiquary as a small but not uninteresting contribution to the National archæological literature.

The original drawings have been added to by a few others, taken from ancient prints wherever the author had access, of wall erections which, by the exigencies of civic extensions had to be removed, and thus so far making the series complete. Short histories, with dates and terms of the Royal Incorporating Charters of these cities, providing for the expense of the erection and subsequent maintenance of the walls surrounding the cities, are given, which disclose by a sidelight the condition of Ireland following on the occupancy of the Anglo-Norman Invaders (1171).

For the legendary history of the derivation of the Celtic names of the cities whose walls are illustrated and described, Standish H. O'Grady has declared himself responsible; and for this invaluable contribution, as well as for other services frankly and ungrudgingly given in revising the text, I trust he will gratify me in allowing me here to acknowledge my deep obligation, and express my grateful thanks to him.

J. S. F.

Callander,
May, 1914.

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CONTENTS AND LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE

Fethard Wall and Antiquarian Group, - - - *Frontispiece*
Castle, Mill Street, Cork, - - - - - - - *Title-page*

I.—Waterford, - - - - - - - - - - 11
1. Round embattled Tower, Tramore Railway Square, 12
2. Square Tower and part of Wall, Brown's Lane, - 13
3. The "French Tower" (circular), Castle Street, - 14
4. Half-moon Tower and part of Wall, in Wedgeworth's stables, - - - - - - - - 15
5. "Reginald" or "Ring" Tower, on the Quay, - 17

II.—Wexford, - - - - - - - - - - 23
6. Ruined Loop-holed House on Wall, - - - 21
7. Circular Wall-tower and part of Wall, - - 23
8. Plan of "West-gate" basement, - - - 24
9. The "West-gate," a square ivy-covered Gate-tower, 25

III.—Fore, - - - - - - - - - - - 28
10. South Gateway. - - - - - - - - 28

IV.—Drogheda, - - - - - - - - - - 30
11. "St. Lawrence Gate," exterior side, - - - 30
12. Do. do., interior side in 1784, - 31
13. "St. John's," or "West-gate," - - - - 32

V.—Fethard, - - - - - - - - - - - 34
14. Square Gate-Tower and Archway, - - - 35

VI.—New Ross, - - - - - - - - - - 37
15. "Fair-gate" (removed), - - - - - 38
16. "Three Bullets Gate" (removed), - - - 39
17. Circular Wall-tower, the only remains of ancient wall fortifications, - - - - - - - 41

PAGE

VII.—KILMALLOCK, - - - - - - - - - - 43

18. Ancient Square Tower with Archway, - - 43
19. North Gate, Spanish architecture, - - - 44

VIII.—KILKENNY, - - - - - - - - - - 46

20. Bastion on ancient Walls of Town, - - 47

IX.—CLONMELL, - - - - - - - - - - 49

21. The "West-gate" and ruined houses on walls (exterior), - - - - - - - - - 49
22. Do. do. do., interior or town side, 50
23. Wall-tower and recessed loopholed wall, St. Mary's churchyard, - - - - - - 51

X.—ATHLONE, - - - - - - - - - - 53

24. The ancient "North-gate," a square building, - 53
25. The Connaught Tower, ancient citadel, - - 54

XI.—GALWAY, - - - - - - - - - - 56

26. The "Blind Arches," the ancient "Water-gate," 56
27. Old Archway, - - - - - - - - 57

XII.—YOUGHAL, - - - - - - - - - - 61

28. "Water-gate," small embattled archway, - 59
29. "The Iron Tower," or "Tinnicastle" Gateway (removed, 1777), - - - - - - 61
30. Half-moon Wall-tower, - - - - 62

XIII.—KELLS (IN OSSORY), - - - - - - - - 64

31. West side of outer surrounding Wall, and its Main Tower, - - - - - - - 64
32. South side of surrounding Wall, and its three Towers, - - - - - - - - - 65
33. Outer Gateway, entrance to the Burghers' Court, 67
34. Gateway and Bridge over the fosse, - - 69
35. Inner Gateway and Bridge over fosse, with Wall and adjacent Tower, separating Burghers' Court from Ecclesiastical Court, 71

PAGE

XIV.—TRIM, - - - - - - - - - - - 74

36. The "Sheep Gate" and part of Town-wall, 74

XV.—ATHENRY, - - - - - - - - - - 75

37. Athenry Square Gate-tower with circular Archway, - - - - - - - - - 75

38. Athenry Wall-tower, - - - - - - 76

XVI.—LONDONDERRY, - - - - - - - - 81

39. Ancient Wall-turret or Bastion, and part of looped Town-wall, - - - - - - 79

40. Ship Quay Gateway, - - - - - - 82

XVII.—CARRICKFERGUS, - - - - - - - - 83

41. North-gate,- - - - - - - - - 83

XVIII.—DUBLIN, - - - - - - - - - - 87

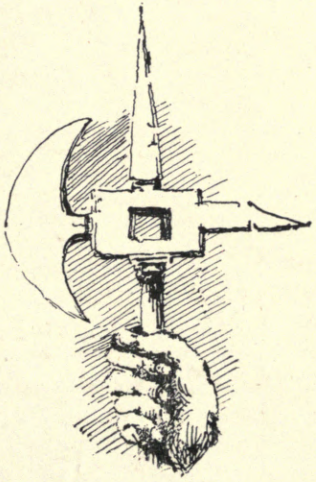
42. "Brown's Castle," one of the principal ancient gate-towers of Dublin's fortifications (removed), 85

XIX.—LIMERICK, - - - - - - - - - - 88

43. Part of Town-wall, - - - - - - 88

44. St. John's Gate, - - - - - - - 89

Knockanneen Castle, Tipperary, - - - - - - 91



Mount Cushel.

THE TOWN-WALL FORTIFICATIONS OF IRELAND.

THE few existing remains of town-wall fortifications, which formerly enclosed and protected every important town in Ireland, and which yearly diminish in number, are, as a class, undeservedly overlooked by writers on the antiquities of such towns as they describe. From their special architecture, however, and diversified forms of construction—apparently regulated by the civic builder's taste, or his lack of it, rather than by any general scheme of fortification applicable to a town's protection—the remains in question are most interesting; and a desire to perpetuate their memory, so far as may be, by these few sketches of those still existing, as well as of others still extant in the last century, must be the excuse for this book.

That earlier town defences were mere palisades or stakes of wood with a covering dry ditch, or, as in a very much later instance, of mere "sods and turfs," called a "varmour," in the town of Carrickfergus, we have abundant evidence in the chronicles of their time. Such defensive works obviously were essential both to the safety of citizens and to the protection of their goods; for the undisciplined and, for siege purposes, ill-equipped Irish naturally would turn their attention to the newly erected towns, with their richer booty, and shun the strongly fortified and garrisoned Norman castles.

Thus, in all charters of early important towns on their incorporation, we find special obligations imposed on their citizens to protect themselves and their property by surrounding the town with sufficient fortifications, embracing walls of stone and essential gateways, to secure it against the assaults of "our Irish rebels"; while for the expense of their erection and subsequent maintenance provision was

made by a tax, or set of taxes, called "the Coquet," eventually known as "the mural tax."[1] Royal charters of the English kings from Henry II. to Richard III. (1171 to 1395)—in which the king designates himself "Rex Ang. Dux Norm. et Aquit. Dominus Hiberniæ[2]—all have similar provisions for this special purpose, and it is to be noted that the material of construction was stipulated to be stone.[3]

In these few sketches will be recognised not only a type of stone structure differing from the castle proper, but in many specimens of towers they will be found to vary not only from those on the walls of neighbouring towns, but even from each other on the same wall. Mr. W. F. Wakeman says that the walls of Irish cities and towns anciently remarkable for strength and the security they afforded, have been almost entirely destroyed, though several gates and towers remain. Those erected by the Danes have disappeared long since, and still existing remains are attributed to the English as being invariably found in connection with places known to have anciently been strongholds of that nation. The greater number of the towers are square and of considerable height (*Handbook of Irish Antiquities*, p. 143). Our sketches show that square forms with pointed gateways form but a very small proportion of the towers now extant, the majority being circular, as well as the archways through the gate-towers.

The general ground plan as shown (*Sketch 8*) is that of the square two-storied tower, West-gate, Wexford: an example with a circular-arched passage through it, which contains in the basement, on the right hand, a small ill-lighted cell for offenders, with a narrow stair leading to a room over the archway; and on the left hand, under recessed archways, a stone seat to accommodate the watchman on guard and the collector of town's customs, whose duty also it was to open and shut as well as to guard the gates.

[1] *Coquet* or *cocket* was a certificate from the Custom House that duty had been paid, and is derived from the words *quo quietus* used in the receipt for the tax, and latterly all customs came to be known by that name.

[2] Henry II. was so pleased with his title *Lord of Ireland*, that in his style he placed it before his duchies of Normandy and Aquitaine.

[3] *Chartæ Privilegia et Immunitatis, Ireland*, 1171 to 1395.

I.—WATERFORD.

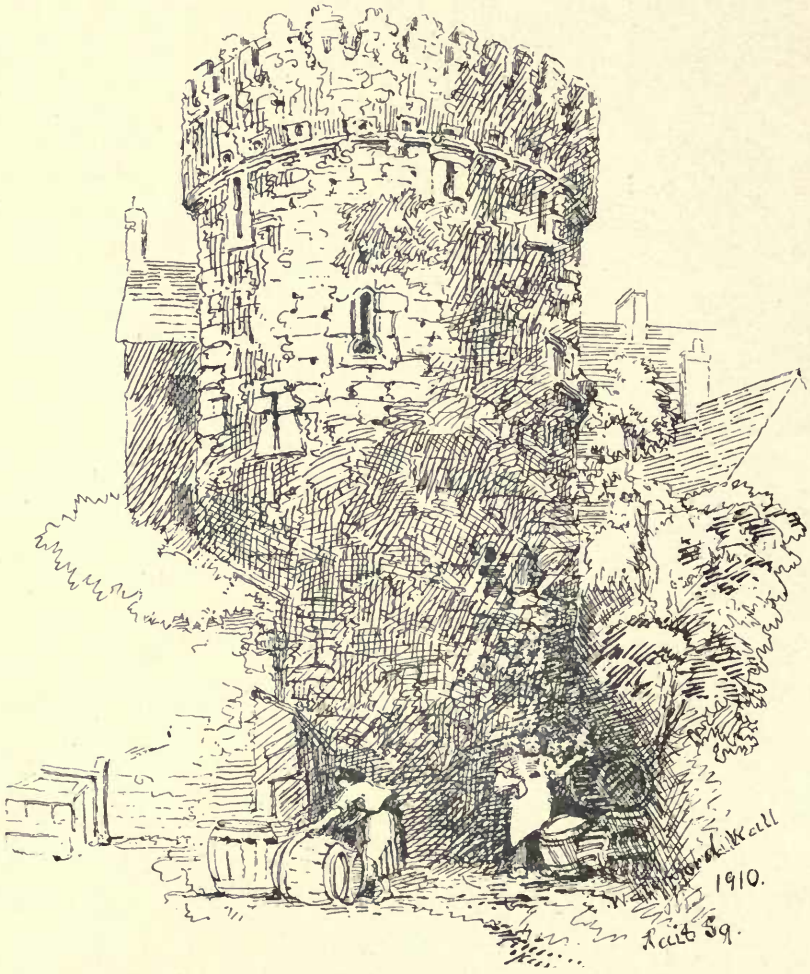
WATERFORD (which occurs in an Anglo-Irish text of about A.D. 1420[1]) is the anglicised form of Norse *Vedrafjord* = Weather-firth, a name which, whether in praise or dispraise, the Ostmen doubtless had good reason for conferring on this bay. The Irish name was, and is, *Port láirge*, which would have been anglicised Portlargy = Thigh-port, and at first sight is obscure perhaps; but the legend, very briefly, is this[2]:—

In prehistoric times Roth, son of Cichang, a Fomorian [Scandinavian] pirate king, came on a Southern prospecting expedition—"his left hand to the sea and his right to the coasts of Britain." Presumably he must have been almost through the straits of Dover when he heard, as it were proceeding from *muir n-Icht* (the Ictian Sea or British Channel) the strains of "mermaids." He rowed for them, and came upon a set of lovely beings with golden hair, etc., who soon sang him to sleep. Then, however, their under-water part came into play. With monstrous talons they dismembered him, devoured him, and by the drift of the sea a *lárac*, or thigh, of him was propelled into the bay in question. *Lárac* is an older form of n.f. *lárag;* gen., *láirge;* dat. acc., *láraig*. Note that in Irish the acute accent equals the French circumflex ^.

As the early Pagan Ostmen had done before them, so also, in A.D. 1171 the Norman invaders recognised the excellent anchorage and shelter which this estuary afforded to their galleys. The still existing walls, which to a considerable extent are of their original height and have five wall-towers, all differing in construction, are fairly well preserved.

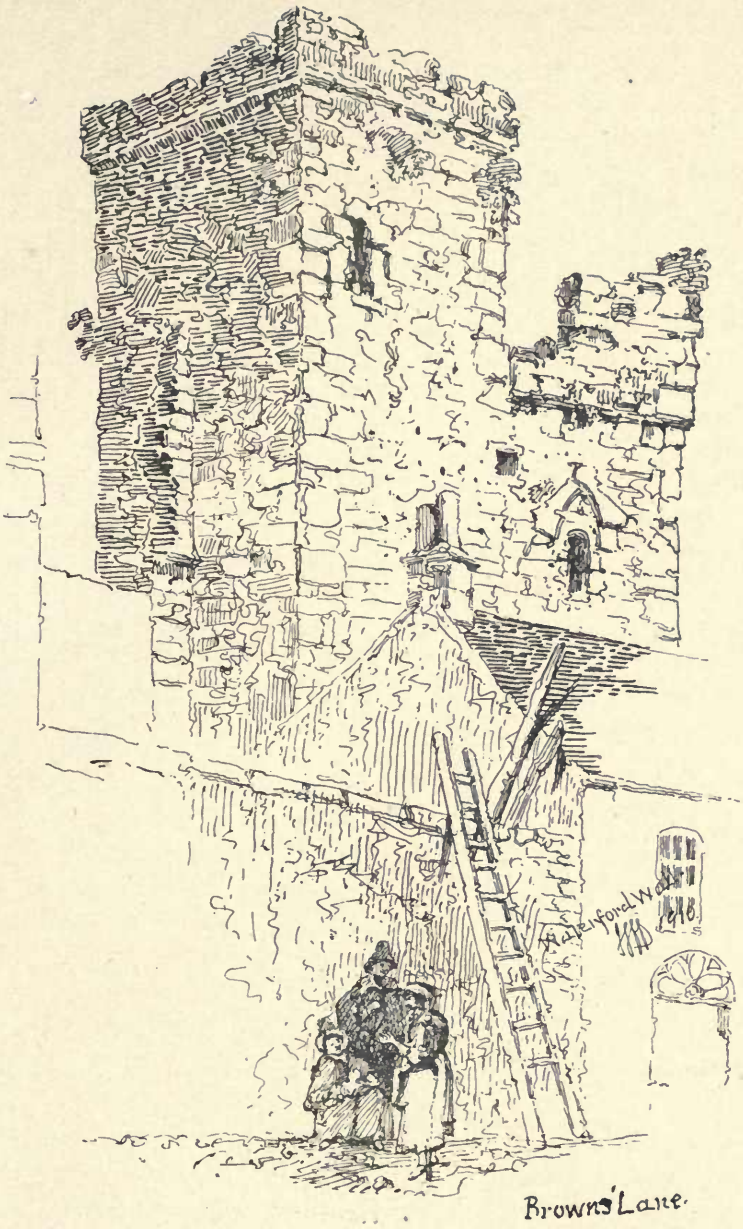
[1] *The English Conquest of Ireland* (E. E. Text Society, Original Series, No. 107).
[2] See Book of Leinster, Book of Ballymote, and other Irish MSS.

Sketch 1 is of a small circular embattled tower, standing in a cooper's yard close to Tramore railway station; evidently it has but recently been repaired, and that to a considerable extent, the upper



Sketch 1.

part and battlements having been modernised. In an old drawing this tower, defined as an "ancient Waterford fortification," appears with its original stepped battlement, as common to Irish castles.



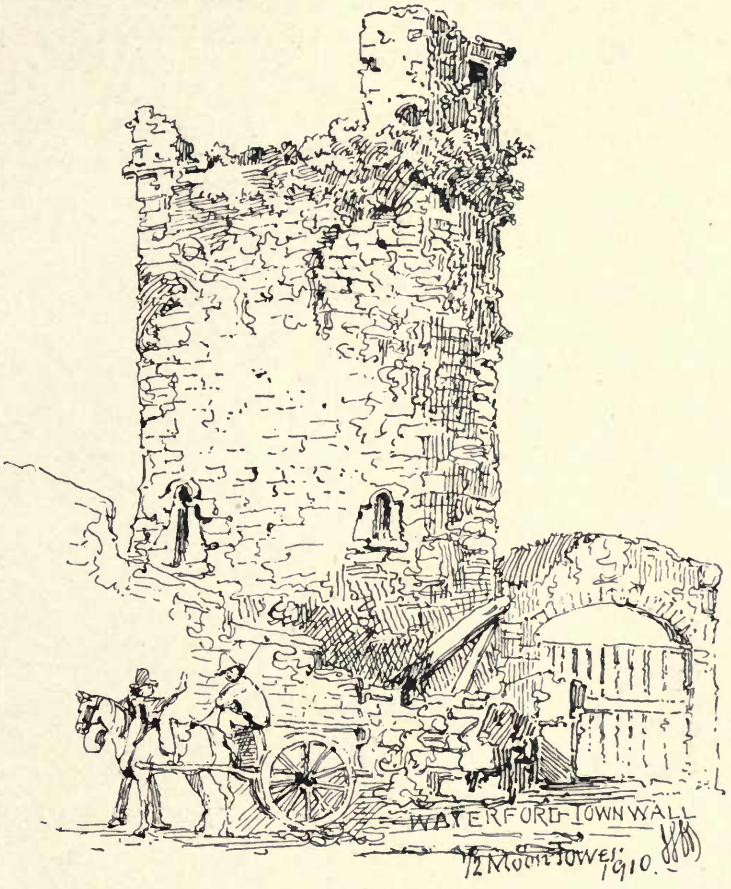
Sketch 2.

Sketch 2 is a square double tower, standing in a private garden; we reach it by following slight traces of the old town-wall. It is roofless, and the walls, which still are of their original height, are roughly built of undressed stones.

Sketch 3.

Sketch 3 is an elevated circular tower called the "French Tower," which we reach by still following the wall up Brown's Lane. Its great

height, overlooking as it does the whole city and harbour, suggests the idea that it was built as a watch tower; or else that it was one of two towers, with an archway between them, and forming one of the city gateways. It is roofless, but its walls are in good preservation.



Sketch 4.

Sketch 4 is the "Half-moon Tower," at which we arrive by still following traces of the wall amongst clustering houses and other buildings; it stands, with a piece of the wall contiguous, in Wedgeworth's stableyard, is less definite in form, and more dilapidated.

The "Beach Tower" is about forty perches further on, and in good preservation. It is built against the escarpment of the wall: on the south side it appears but a few feet high, whereas on the north it shows a considerable elevation of wall. So closely surrounded and hidden by buildings is it, however, that it cannot be photographed, and only with difficulty could a perfect drawing of it be made.

Sketch 5 is "Reginald's Tower," or the "Ring Tower," which some antiquaries will have to be a wall-tower of the same series. But neither in architecture nor in construction is it either Irish or Norman, nor will any observant antiquary suppose that Normans could have built it at one time with the other existing wall-towers, although subsequently it may have come to be used as such. Its solid, carefully-constructed masonry of dressed stones, without the usual batter to its walls, points to the foreign builder, and one of an epoch prior to the Anglo-Norman invasion. We have an example in the castle of Grandiston; but the tower there seems to be a copy or adaptation, and clearly was erected at a long subsequent period.

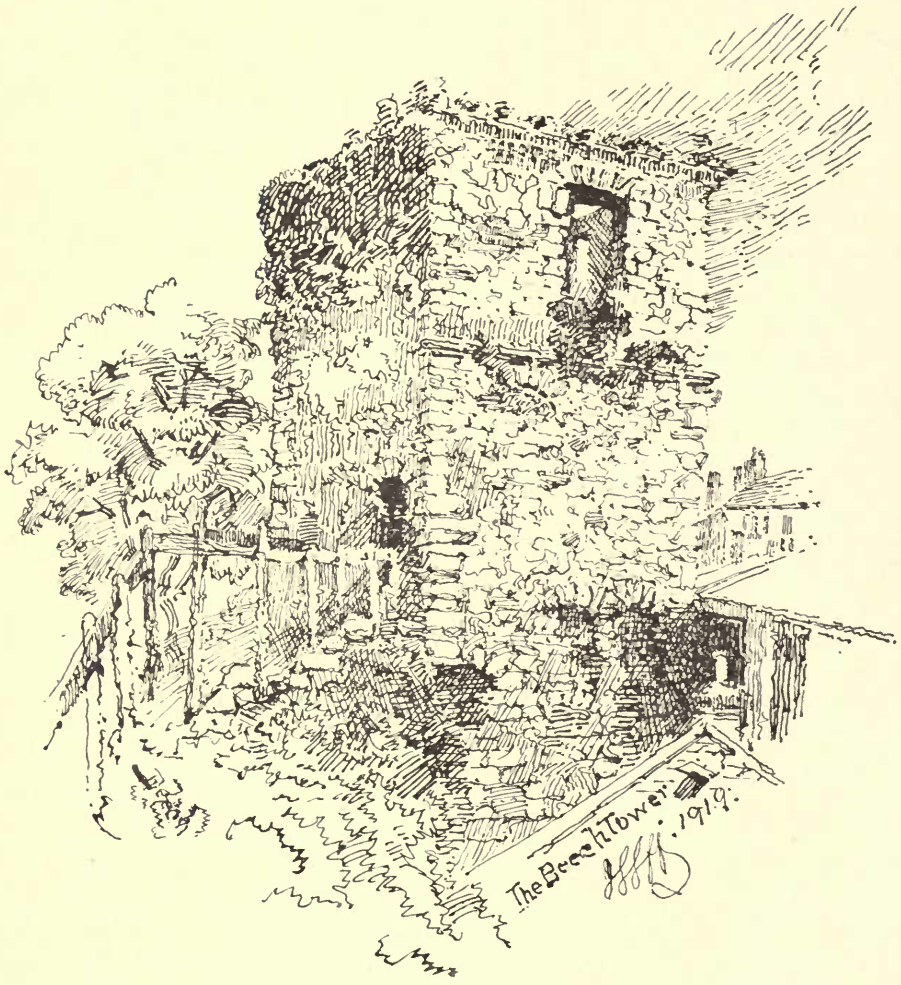
Of the twenty towers which tradition attributes to the city walls, the following are, with their names, reproduced from a map of 1673:— (1) Ring Tower; (2) St. John's Gate and Tower; (3) Close Gate; (4) French Tower; (5) St. Patrick's Gate and Fort; (6) Barrystrand Gate; (7) Arauendell's Fort; (8) Arauendell's Gate; (9) Lady's Gate; (10) Green Tower; (11) Colbeck Gate.

Mr. F. Power, writing in the Royal Irish Antiquarian Society's *Journal* for September, 1912, describes the city in its earliest stage as having covered some thirty acres in all, and girt by a stone wall supplemented with deep fosses, having strengthening towers at its various angles.

"One of these latter, Reginald's (or the Ring) Tower, and a second, Turgesius' Tower, stood close to the present Cathedral in Barronstrand Street; a third, St. Martin's, near the present convent in Lady Lane; a fourth, the French Tower, in Castle Street; and, for certain, a bastion at the south-west angle; and, about twenty yards from its locality, a nearly perfect square bastion on the east side of the Railway Square, entered through a private residence; and a squat tower midway between the south-west and north-west angles and towers.

REGINALD OR RING TOWER.

Sketch 5.



"BEECH TOWER" (REAR OF HARVIE'S WORKS, WATERFORD).

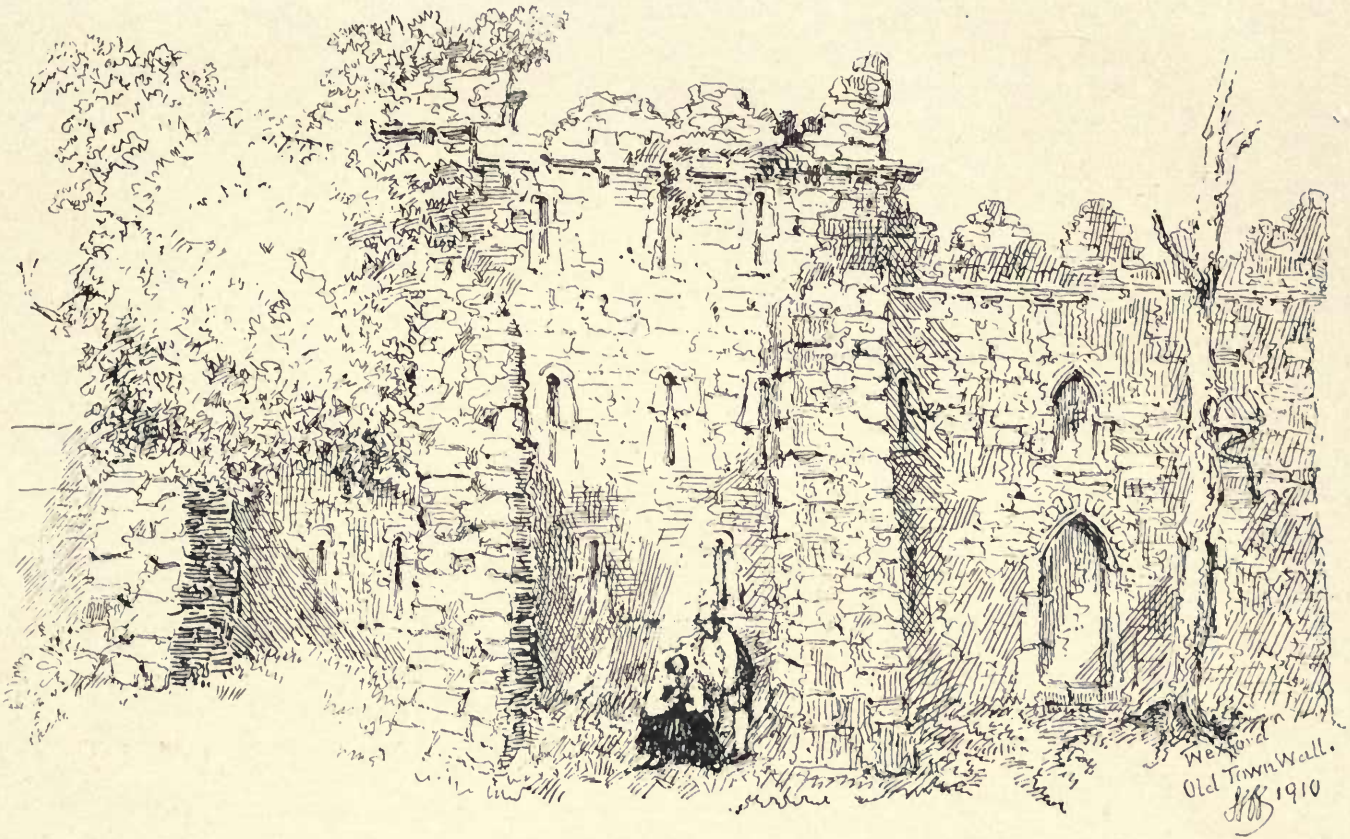
Sketch 4 a.

To face page 19.

"From the French Tower the wall is traceable, and runs on the north side of Brown's Lane and rear of Stephen's Street to the jail, the latter occupying the site of the ancient citadel, it being here arched and recessed; and at the rear of Harvie's works, another small tower, called the 'Beach Tower'; and in Wedgewood's stables, above referred to, and forty perches distant therefrom, a half-round bastion completes the sixth existing tower; and thence the city wall ran north-east to meet at Turgesius' Tower of the earlier Danish city."

The city's earliest charters are those granted by King John in 1205; by Edward III., April 20, 1377; and by Richard II., July 30, 1388; which, *inter alia*, imposed on the citizens the burden of erecting and maintaining in efficiency the stone walls and towers and the gates of the city's then limited area, along with its quay and harbour, for which purposes the corporation is granted the right to levy the custom called the *coquet*, and that for a space of ten years.

To judge by the walls of two at least out of five towers, they may well be as old as the first of these charters, the third of which gives a reason for the concession of this coquet: that the town walls had been dilapidated and breached during the slaughterings and depredations "of our Irish enemies and our rebellious Englishmen, as well as by the invasion of our various other enemies, French and Spanish."



TOWN WALL, WEXFORD.

Sketch 6.

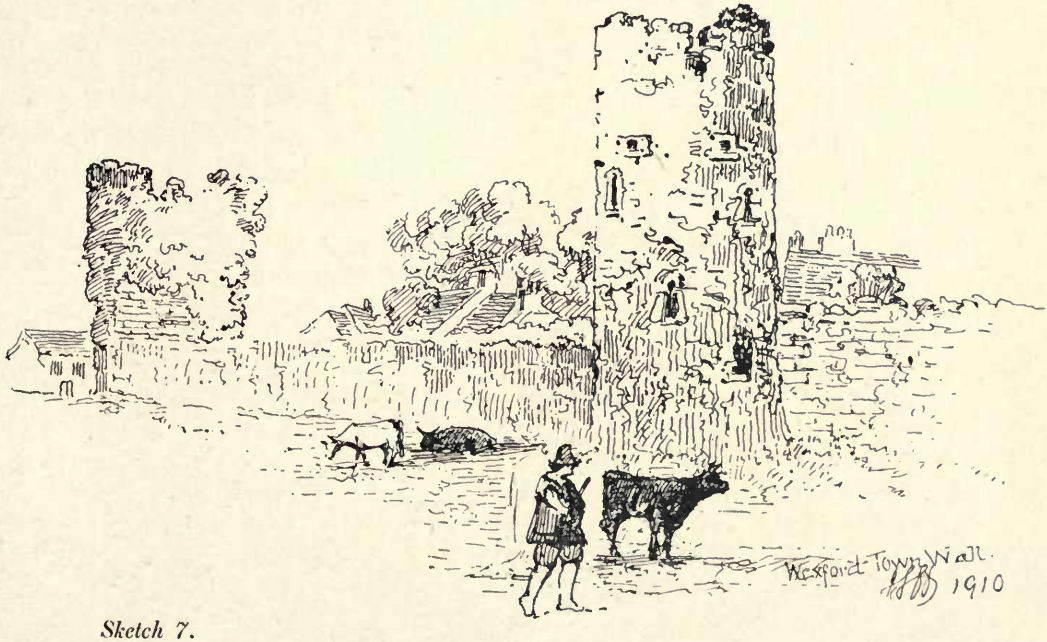
II.—WEXFORD.

WEXFORD, anciently *Weisefordie*, a compound the prior half of which is not satisfactorily explained by the authorities. In Irish it was, and is, called *Loch Garman*, and of course has its legend:—

In the time of the monarch *Cathaoir mór* (died, A.D. 166) was a notable freebooter and outlaw, *Garman*, who, in the *féis Temrach*, or convention of Tara (which was a "Truce of God"), purloined the queen's diadem; for which cast of his art her husband had him drowned in what now, *anglice*, is Wexford harbour.

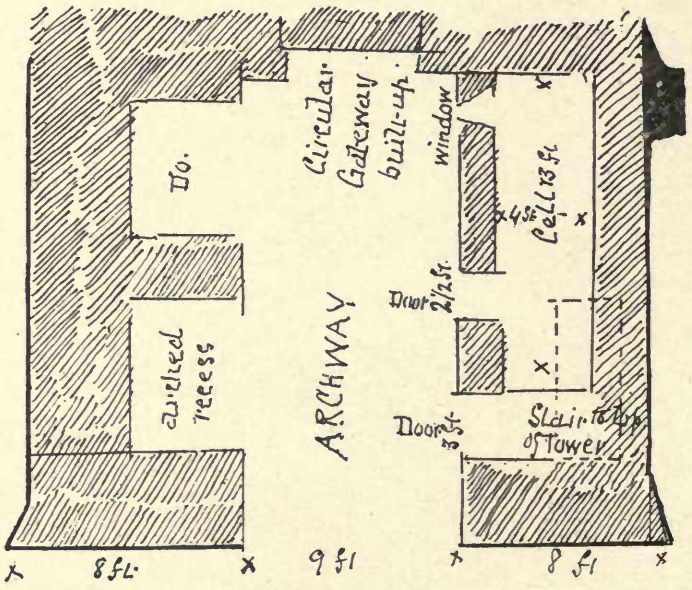
This lesser port has in good preservation a considerable portion of its old walls, with three towers. These walls, it is alleged, originally were twenty feet in height and on the inner side reinforced by an earthen rampart twenty feet wide. The castle proper, an old print of which, from a drawing by Thomas Dinely (1680) is extant, is quite demolished.

Sketch 6.—From its type and present condition, this tower seems to be more modern than the others; probably, indeed, it dates only from the Rebellion of 1798, and is like part of a looped dwelling-house built into the wall rather than a tower of defence.

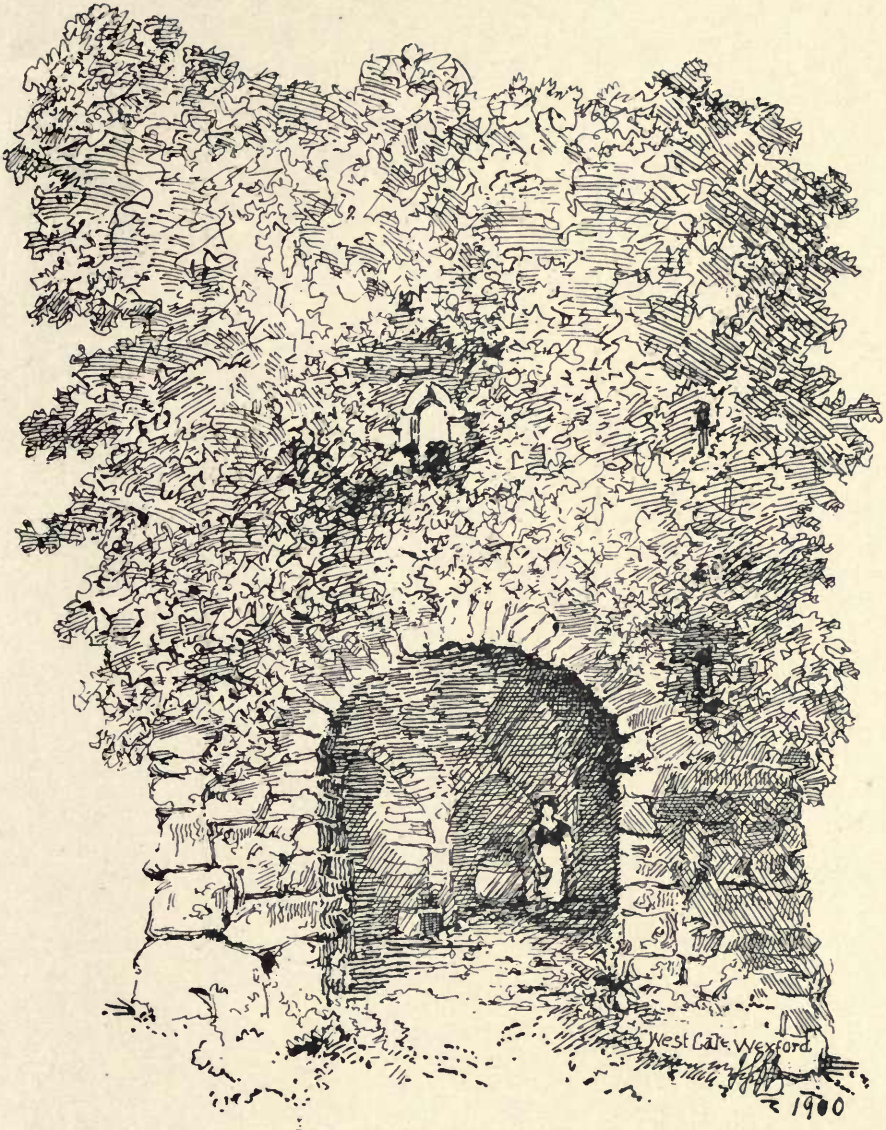


Sketch 7.

Sketch 7 shews a long length of the wall, with a tower—circular, roofless, and devoid of battlement, its walls looped—and the "West Gate" tower in the distance, in the outskirts of the town; which West Gate tower *(Sketch 9)* is the third and, architecturally, the most important of them: a square, ivy-clad building of two storeys, and pierced by a circular archway; it is about twenty-five feet square, the vaulted passage (the outer end of which is now built up) is nine feet wide, and in the right-hand side of same is the door of a small, ill-lighted cell for offenders. On the same side, a narrow, winding stair leads to a chamber over the archway, lighted by a small window, and no doubt used to accommodate the civic guard and the collector of customs. In the left wall of the gateway are two arched recesses, with seats for the guard and gatekeeper when on duty; all which details appear on the annexed basement plan, which also may serve as a compendious illustration of the conventional internal arrangements of such walled cities' gateways.



Sketch 8.



WEST GATE, WEXFORD.

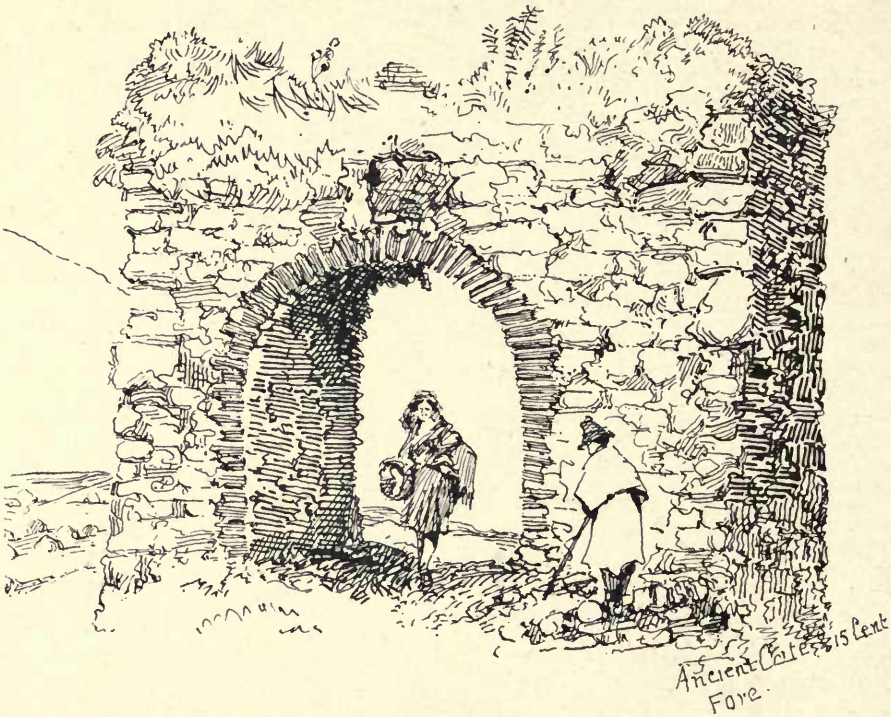
Sketch 9.

Wexford's earliest mural charter, granted by Strongbow's successor, the Earl of Pembroke, is dated 23rd July, 1317; it refers to certain cruel murders and atrocities committed in the city, the convicted authors of which were to suffer punishment at the castle gate. Now in those days there was but one form of chastisement for such and for many other offences.

These last two remaining towers would not seem of a construction so early as the charter's date; but may well be the original structures from time to time repaired and partly rebuilt, according as they suffered in divers sieges, the last of which was in 1798.

III.—FORE.

FORE—anciently "Foure"—a small town in the County Westmeath, the Irish name of which is *Fabhar* or *Fobhar*.



Sketch 10.

Sketch 10.—Two fragments of the wall remain: one comprises the south gate archway, another a similar archway of the east gate. Both are all ruinous and featureless, sole relics of this ancient Anglo-Norman city's fortifications. The first tower is of rude but

EAST GATE, FORE (INTERIOR).

Sketch 10 a.

To face page 29.

massive masonry, with its circular arch formed of dressed stones; and the discernible jamb and lintel stones of a small window, built up, indicate a former chamber over the gateway, otherwise its scant surviving walls would scarcely be taken for a gate tower at all.

Tradition ascribes the town's foundation to the Norman invaders, but the erection of these walls is attributed to the fifteenth century, and that probably is the likelier date. They have been carefully preserved as venerable memorials of this village's ancient importance as a city.

IV.—DROGHEDA.

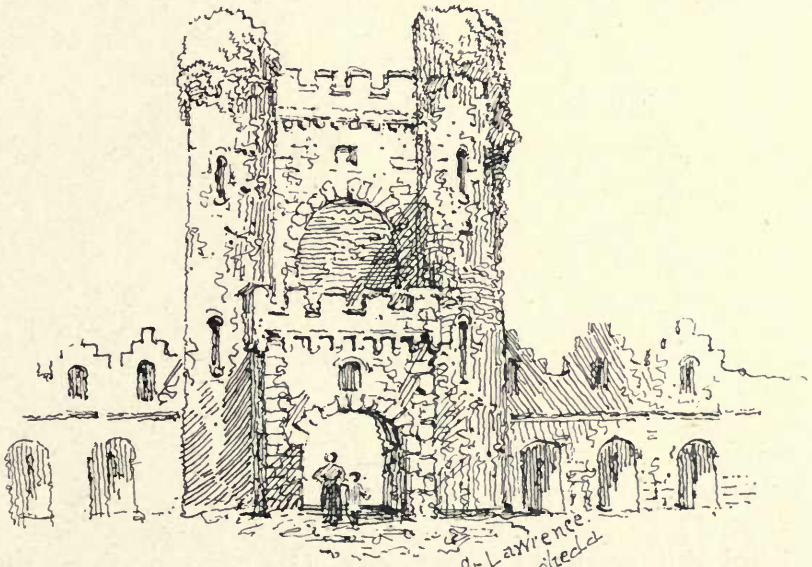
DROGHEDA, County Louth—in Irish called *Droichead átha*, = "Ford-bridge," in token that an old highway ford had been spanned by a bridge—has preserved two of its city gates. Of the foundations of its other defences the remains are but few.

Sketch 11.

Sketch 11.—St. Lawrence's Tower, drawn as here in 1898, was restored on the original lines in the early part of 1700, and, as a

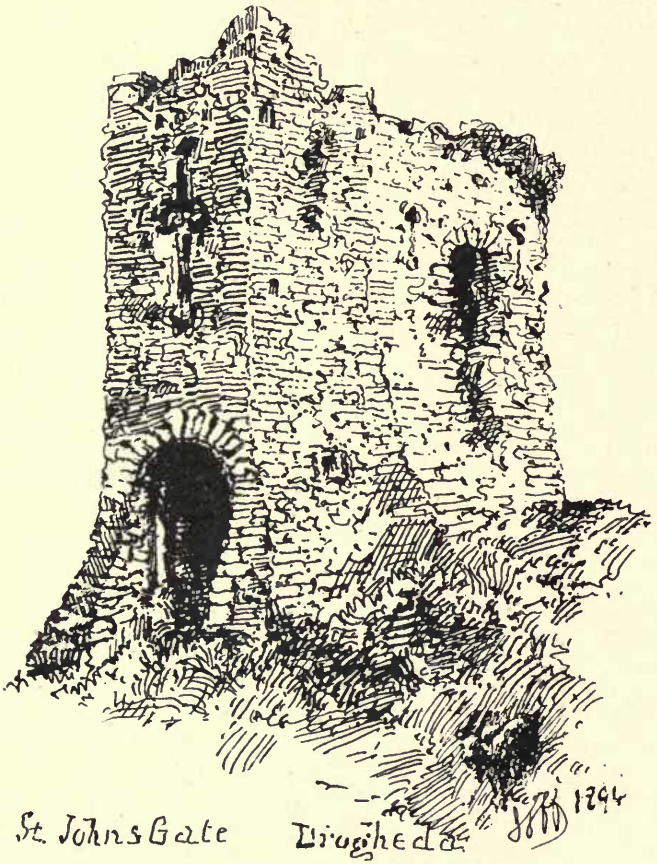
comparison with an old print very faithfully shows, it is a stately structure, and interesting as a good specimen of its class; perhaps the most imposing town gateway now in Ireland, and the pride of its citizens. A casual observer will not readily understand the object of such massive gateways with connecting walls so much lower and of weaker masonry, which must seriously have discounted the strong tower's defensive value. May we attribute the size and imposing architectural appearance of St. Lawrence's Tower to the Corporation's pardonable pride in making the chief entrance to their town attractive, and commensurate with their civic dignity? It may be described as consisting of two lofty circular towers connected by a hollow wall, in the lower part of which is an archway. The towers, as well as the arched wall which unites them and the continuing town-wall, are pierced with numerous recessed loop-holes on the town side; originally these were furnished with timber platforms extending from tower to tower, otherwise defenders of the gate could not have used them (see *Sketch 12*). It is situated in the busy centre of the town.

Sketch 12 is of the interior or townside prior to the restoration.



Sketch 12.

Sketch 13 shows the west, or St. John's, gate of same date—a tower with square base and octagon upper half, standing isolated in the suburbs. It also (although a smaller structure) is a picturesque feature, yet not equalling its larger sister in pretension to ornament.



Sketch 13.

It is the only other remaining tower—octagonal in form; it is pierced with long, narrow loop-holes, and was further strengthened by a portcullis, the groove of which still is nearly perfect. Since the period of Cromwell's "crowning mercy"—the successful storming of Drogheda in 1690—the walls gradually have sunk to utter ruin; but

from the portions yet existing in tolerably perfect shape, we can form an idea of their ancient extent, strength, and architectural characteristics.

From an early period this was a walled town and strong place. In 911 we find it the hold of Turgesius the Dane, who fortified it. Immediately after the Anglo-Norman invasion, it was looked upon as a strategetical point of great importance, was strengthened accordingly, became the chief seat of the nominally ruling power, and so continued from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. Successive "lord-deputies" (= lord-lieutenants) kept up the strength of these defences. In comparatively recent years parts of the lofty and massive walls stood at their original height, while of the original four gateways the above two still are excellently preserved, affording a fair specimen of the old fortifications, and a type of their towers.

The city's charter (Henry III., September 20, 1219) concedes to the citizens various customs and port dues, under an obligation to maintain its stone walls, its bridge and quay. To this date may be ascribed the erection also of said works.

Another charter (Richard II., October 24, 1385) yet further conceded to the mayor and bailies right to levy new dues, and confirmed the former grant of customs for maintenance, repairs, rebuilding the now dilapidated walls, paving the streets, etc.

V.—FETHARD.

FETHARD (pronounced as English "feathered"), County Tipperary, is a town lying some seven miles north of Clonmel. In Irish it is called *Fidh árd*, = "High-wood," a name which, in the case of a synonymous place in Clare, is more phonetically anglicised "Feeard" (to rhyme with "hard").

It is a town of great antiquity, once of importance and high prosperity, but now reduced to little more than a village, noted for the fine abbey and monastery which alone testify to its one-time grandeur. The ecclesiastical ruins show the refectory, kitchen, and dormitory; these, although roofless, are in excellent preservation, and situated at the south-east end of the town, where parts of the ancient walls are visible. There were four gate towers, but only the north gateway and tower are preserved (*Sketch 14*). Its arch spans the principal entrance to the town. It is the chief relic of the ancient and extensive wall originally surrounding the town, which is stated to have been half a mile long by a quarter of a mile in breadth.

The guard-house attached (see left of sketch) once had two storeys, but is much dilapidated. The tower's arch alone remains, containing a basement cell and, overhead, a civic guard's apartment.

An early charter of Edward I. gives the Corporation power to enclose the town within a fortified wall; it is confirmed by one of Edward III., dated October 18, 1375, which, moreover, enables the Corporation to levy customs out of which to defray the upkeep of their stone walls.

A short distance east of the abbey church is a square castle, measuring forty-two by thirty-three feet on the outside, immediately south of which are two others—one of similar dimensions joining the wall, which here is of some height; the second, of an ornamental architectural character, with a hanging bastion and large east window, may be part either of the abbey's domestic buildings or of the bishop's palace. Smaller towers or bastions adorn this part of the wall, which seems to have been kept in good repair; and these four ruined buildings, ecclesiastical and castellated, together with the abbey church spire, make an interesting antiquarian group (*Frontispiece*).

FETHARD GATE TOWER.

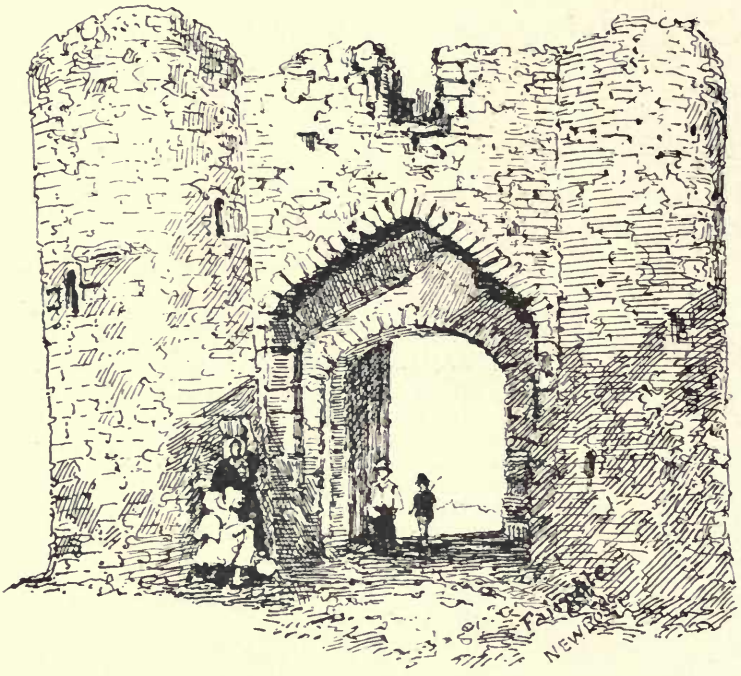
Sketch 14.

VI.—NEW ROSS.

New Ross, County Waterford—in Irish, *Ros mhic Thriuin*, = "Grove of Treon's son." Here Earl Strongbow's daughter (by his wife Eva, daughter of Dermot MacMurrough *na n Gall*, = "of the English") built a magnificent city, as its ruins sufficiently prove. This place is not to be confounded with *Ros glas*, = "Green grove," the site of *mainistir Eimhín*, = "St. Eiven's monastery," where now stands the town of Monasterevan (pronounced "Munsterevan") in the Queen's County. In most egregious fashion, Dr. Lanigan, in his *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, I., p. 166, makes the two towns one, and gives the wildest explanation of both names. New Ross retains its Irish name, and in the *Life of St. Abban* is said to be (as it still is) "washed by the tide"; and Colgan, in his *Acta Sanctorum*, 1645, describes it as being remarkable for the ruins of churches and fortifications; whereas Old Ross is not washed by the tide, never was washed by the tide, nor ever had any ruins at all save of one small, rude parish church. Lanigan must have been misled by the epithet *Old*; but by a strange anomaly *New* Ross it is (as is well known) that stands within the walls of the town built by the Earl's daughter shortly after the Norman invasion. *Old* Ross is five miles to the east of it (condensed from John O'Donovan's note to *Annals of the Four Masters*, *ad an.* 1394). Holinshead also (*temp.* Elizabeth) describes New Ross as an ancient city and "a haven of great import; walls, gates, and towers, equal in circuit to London walls; three gorgeous gates—the 'Bishop's gate' on the east, 'Aldgate' on the south-east, the 'South gate,' and a notable wooden bridge."

In the *Report* of the Royal Irish Society of Antiquaries, vol. xxvi., a writer emits the opinion that the Bishop's gate was known also as the Fair gate, sometimes, too, as the Maiden gate, and that of the four gates of Ross this was the most remarkable, which in the early fifteenth century was rebuilt by Richard Barrett, Lord Chancellor of Ireland and Bishop of Ferns. He resided at Mountgarrett Castle, about three miles from New Ross, and through this gate he passed to officiate in St. Mary's Church.

Within memory of living persons, in place of mere fragments here stood a beautiful English gateway. Mr. Wakeman described it as the most ancient and most elegant structure of its class then extant in Ireland, which the beauty of its "first pointed" details rendered well worthy of being called "fair." This gateway had a portcullis,



Sketch 15.

and the soffit of the archway was delicately groined. *Sketch 15* shows its condition when Mr. Wakeman wrote, and, if accurate, scarcely warrants his flattering description.

Sketch 16.—The "Three Bullets Gateway" had its singular name thus: in 1649, as a summons to surrender, Cromwell fired three cannon-shots at it; the balls remain in the walls. It formed a prominent feature in the "battle of New Ross," June 15, 1798, and looked down on the severest struggle fought with the rebels. Here

Sketch 16.

too it was that Lord Mountjoy, colonel of Dublin militia, was piked when, generously but rashly, he advanced to reason with the rebels: a piece of treachery which roused to such a pitch of fury his own handful of troops that they repulsed the whole rebel force and well avenged his death.

Sketch 17.—The only existing wall-tower, presenting a few bond-stones which connected it with the original wall (the foundation stones of which are visible yet), stands some fifty yards above the site of the vanished Three Bullets Gate.

A charter of Richard II., July 17, 1377, provides out of the customs £4 (four pounds), to be faithfully expended (nor applied to any other purpose) on maintenance and repairs of the town walls and port—*muros et portum ejusdem repaire et sustintaire.* A subsequent charter, January 26, 1394, referring to the wall's then state of dilapidation and destruction caused by "our Irish rebels," concedes for the reparation of the same that custom called "the Coquet."

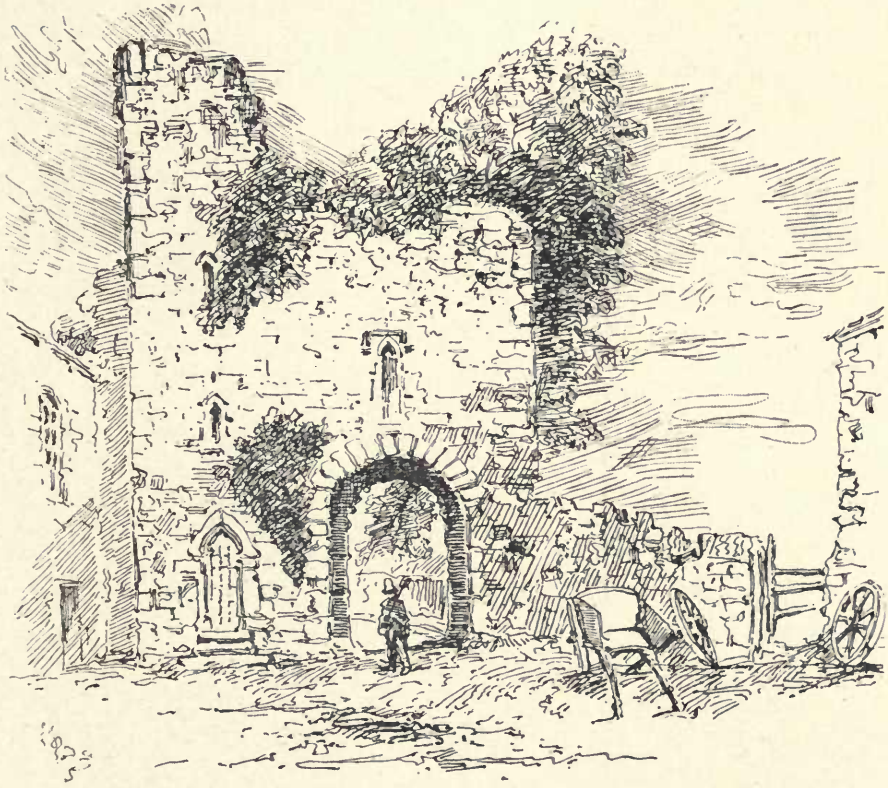
A curious Norman-French poem by Friar Michael of "Kyledare" (Kildare, in Irish *Cill Dara*) ascribes the building of the walls and fortifications of New Ross to a "chaste widow, a politic dame and bountiful gentlewoman, called Rose;" whereas, in Irish, *rŏs* (Welsh *rhôs*) in seaside topography means a point or headland; inland, a grove.

NEW ROSS WALL TOWER.

Sketch 17.

VII.—KILMALLOCK.

Kilmallock, County Limerick—in Irish *cill Mocheallóg*, = "Mocheallóg's church." Between 639 and 656 that saint founded a monastery on this part of what eventually was to be a part of the Desmond Fitzgeralds' extensive territory; the town, however, is said to have been a walled city before the Anglo-Norman invasion in 1171, and the abounding ruins of grand mansions within its precincts have gained it the name of "Ireland's Baalbec."

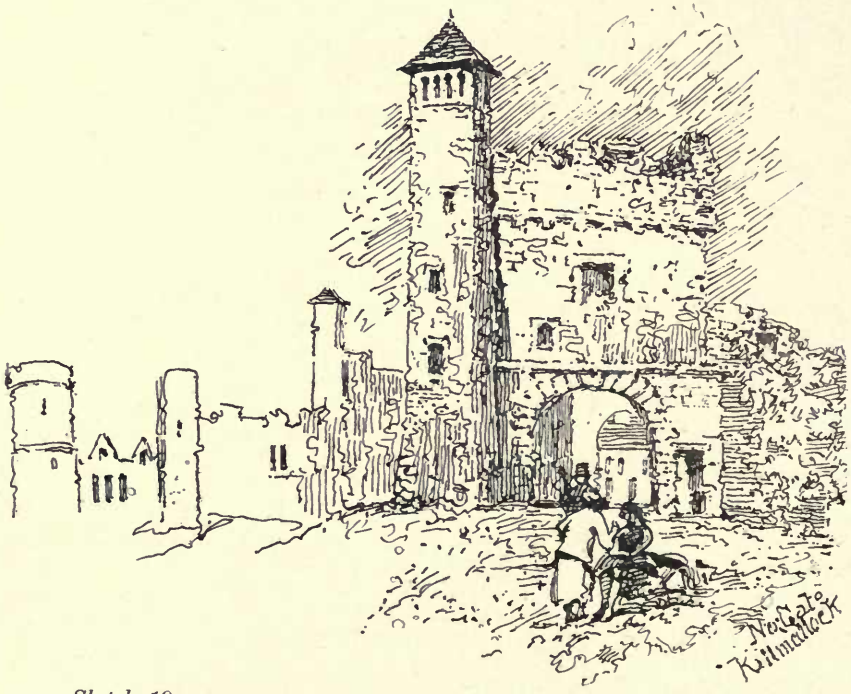


Sketch 18.

It now is a mass of ruined hovels, propped by walls of once stately dwellings, which are represented as having been of hewn stone and generally of three storeys, ornamented with battlements, and

having limestone window-frames with tasteful mouldings and mullions, and capacious fireplaces carved in bold and massive style, with the original sharpness well retained. Some few of these elaborate and massive dwellings, indeed, have lasted on, but in more or less damaged condition. Altogether, Kilmallock affords a depressing picture of decayed grandeur. So late as 1783 it was a parliamentary burgh returning two members.

Sketch 18.—The only gatehouse still preserved is a half-ruined tower comprising a basement and three storeys. Through the former is a circular archway; and the apartments over it are reached, through a pointed doorway (the windows also of which are pointed), by a stair directly off the court or street. The architecture is of a light, ornamental, and tasteful, rather than massive, character, seemingly scarce older than the seventeenth century.



Sketch 19.

Sketch 19 is of the North Gate; the other, of the two tower gateways referred to by O'Donovan as existing in his day (1840) in

excellent preservation, and as being in its architectural features a specimen of the Spanish or Moorish type of tower.

To a massive, square, low tower, with a broad archway through it, is attached a tall, narrow, lance-shaped tower, narrowing from its foundations to the roof, of a curved or semi-circular shape with overhanging eaves, and a range of narrow windows in the top chamber; it presents the appearance of a "minaret." In their architecture the two gateway towers are of distinctly different types.

Crofton Croker (died 1854) describes the town as being entered by a dark and massive gateway. In his day two of the original four gates were extant—of solid architecture of Moorish or Spanish character. In some places the lower walls retained their original height, and could be traced continuously from the gateway on the Charleville side to that on the Limerick side, which is considered to be one-fourth of their original extent. Two ruined abbeys on the opposite side complete the vestiges of old Kilmallock.

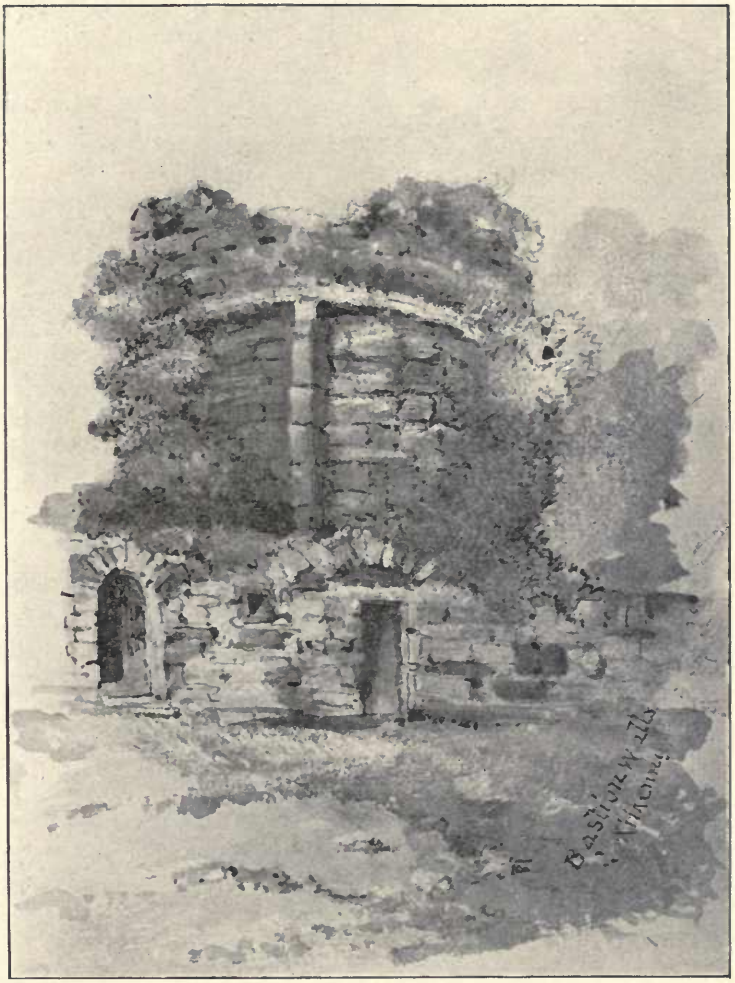
A charter of Edward III., March 4, 1374, refers to the bounds within which the citizens were empowered to exercise their functions and levy customs "to enclose the said town's fortifications with a stone wall"; it also mentions its former wall-structures as having been destroyed by fire, so that likely these had been wooden palisades, now to be replaced by stonework.

VIII.—KILKENNY.

KILKENNY—in Irish, *cill Chainnigh*, = "Church of St. Cainnech," angl. "Canice" (died 598).

Sketch 20.—"The Bastion Walls of Kilkenny" is the name given to this massive circular tower, which, with a great part of the old town wall, existed down to some thirty years ago; but this, the most interesting part, as well as much more of the old wall, have all but disappeared long since. It is a circular, massive-built, dome-roofed tower, having in its base two doors and a small window; which base would seem to have consisted of some building with apartments constructed in the wall itself or on it, and from this building the tower springs.

A charter of Richard II., May 2, 1394, confirms to the corporation and community their former privilege of levying customs for repairing and maintenance of walls, towers, and gateways; all which, to judge by their architecture and other evidences, may well be referred to that date.



WALL BASTION, KILKENNY.

Sketch 20.

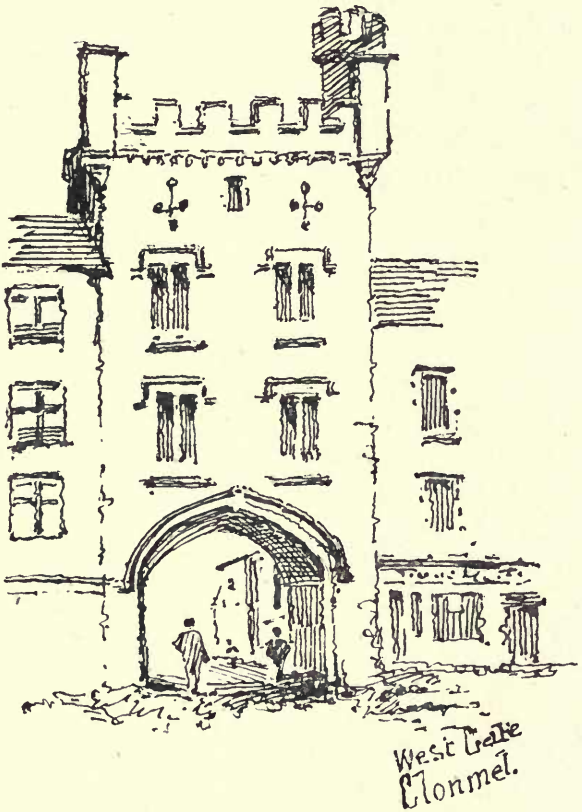
IX.—CLONMELL.

CLONMELL, County Tipperary—in Irish, *Chuain meala*, = "Honey lawn" or "meadow," a name supposed to have been won for the present town's site by the abundance of wild honey bees in the district.

Sketch 21.

Sketch 21.—In 1650, Clonmell was besieged by Cromwell, who at first was repulsed with great loss by the commandant, Hugh O'Neill,

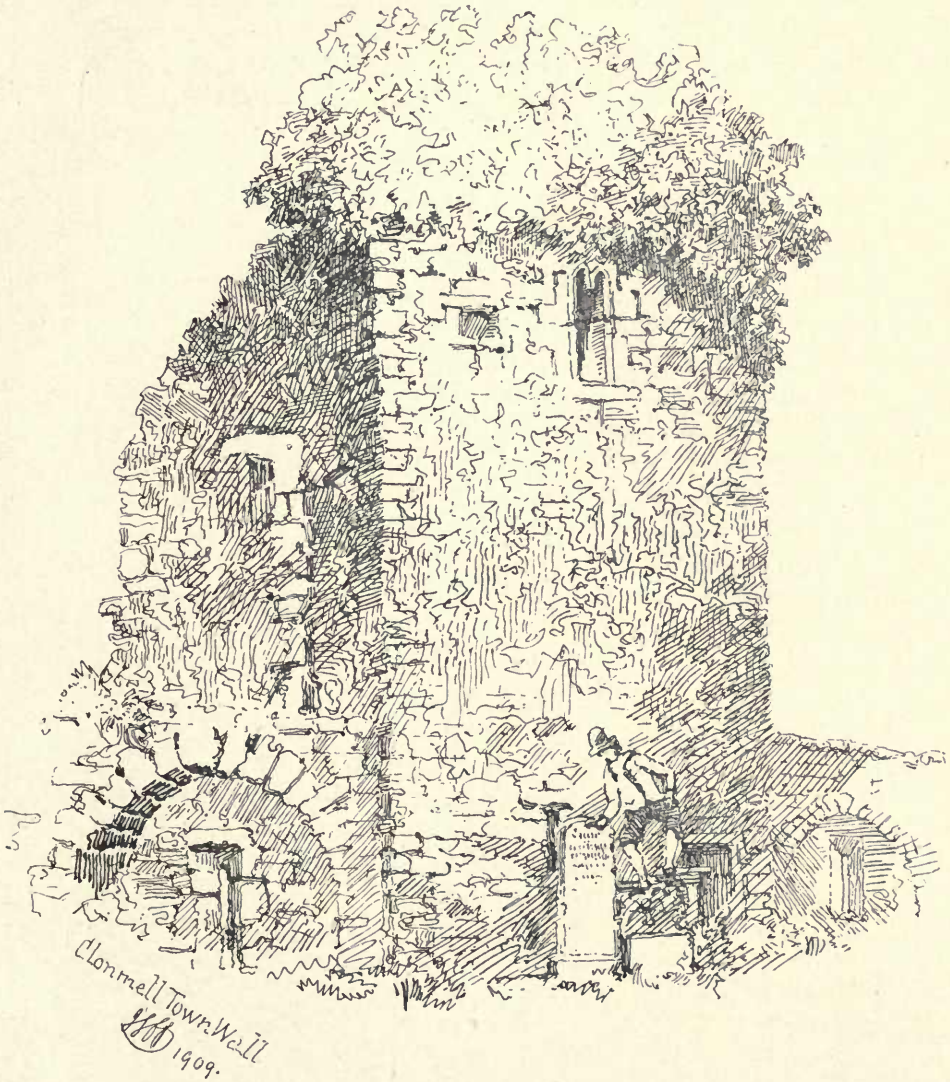
major-general, with twelve hundred men. He was nephew to Owen Rua O'Neill, Irish commander-in-chief, and both were officers in the Spanish service. This attack is said to have been delivered at West Gate; for the rest, Ludlow says that the breach eventually was made at a place selected, viz., in a part of the walls on which houses abutted, at no great distance from the church. Our sketch shows the ruined walls of houses built on this part of the wall, and is near both the church and the West Gate, and probably is the above breach.



Sketch 22.

Sketch 22 shows the interior façade of the gateway as modernised and rebuilt, consequently devoid of all antiquarian interest.

Sketch 23.—There are two wall towers, the masonry of one of which is too hidden by the luxurious growth of ivy to enable its form to be defined; both, with the wall almost at its original height, form the west boundary of the graveyard of the venerable St. Mary's



Sketch 23.

Church. The tower illustrated has a basement and an upper chamber, inter-communicating by a narrow stair in the wall; and this, with the town wall itself, is looped for musketry. The tower's ivy-clad neighbour, of apparently similar form, the adjacent extramural proprietor has, by means of a flight of steps, connected with his garden, which lies under the wall on its outer side. Neither tower, at a pinch, could accommodate more than ten men. The most favourable terms of capitulation were had from Cromwell by the town matrons' device of mounting the battlements with empty churns laid on their sides, thus, to the besiegers' dismay, displaying what seemed to be new and formidable engines of war, and presaging a tedious siege.

This clean and prosperous town, with its fine, tree-lined promenade extending about two miles down the bank of its river, the Suir, is built partly upon several islands in the same, which bridges connect with the promenade. Clonmel is a credit to the enterprise and conscientiousness of its municipal authorities, and to other communities in Ireland offers an excellent example. From its proximity, also, to divers ancient abbeys and castles of great interest, to antiquary and artist alike it is a convenient centre.

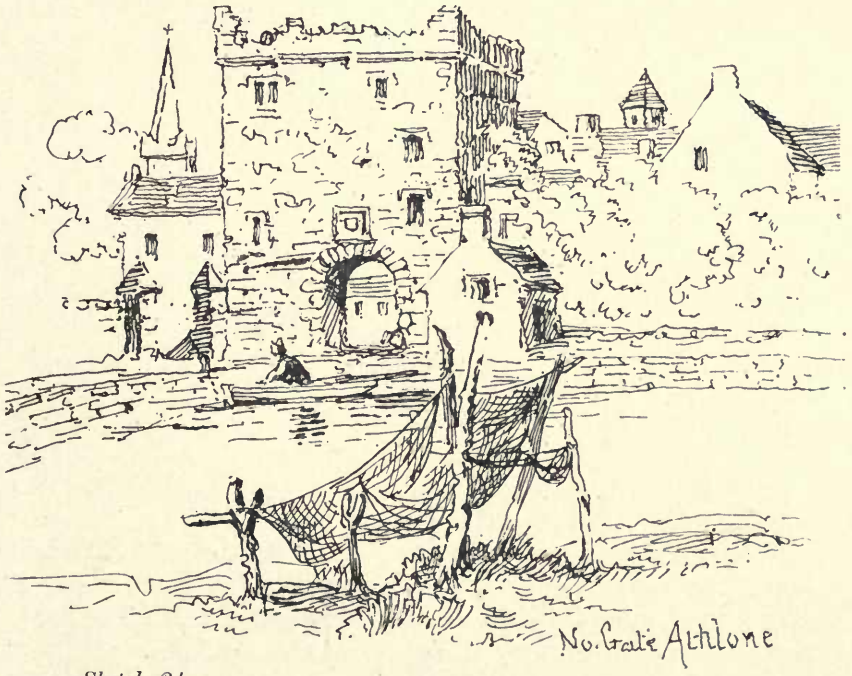
An early charter, October 10, 1299, is from Oto de Gendesino; and the provisions regulating its customs and port dues would denote that even at this youthful stage of its existence this was a commercial port of importance. If the river Suir, however, was of a depth no greater than it is at present, it could have been, as now it is, navigable merely for flat-bottomed barges towed by horses, with a shipping trade of but little importance.

Oto de Gendesino seems to have derived and held his rights as a vassal off the crown; and his charter is superseded by the following royal charters: Edward III., of January 22, 1355; July 12, 1364; and January 20, 1371—issued to the community direct, incorporating the town and conceding to the Corporation various specified customs, such dues to be "faithfully" expended in repairing the town-walls and bridge.

X.—ATHLONE.

ATHLONE, part in Roscommon (Connacht), part in Westmeath (Leinster), in Irish is *Ath luain*, = "Loin-ford," a name which originated thus:—

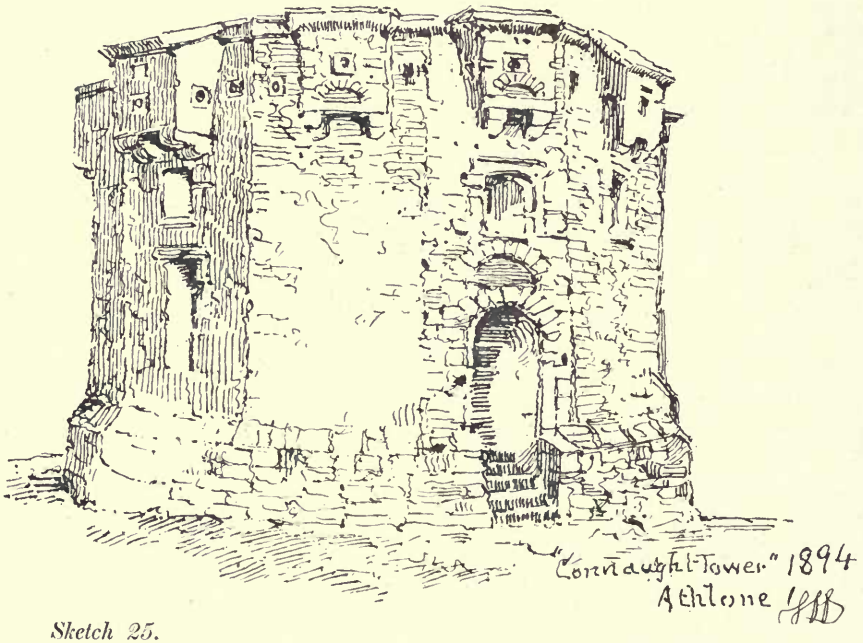
About A.D. 1, *Ailell*, King-consort of Meave, Queen of Connacht, owned a special bull called *an Finnbheannach*, = "the Whitehorned," which to other bulls was as is a demigod or, at all events, a superman to the ordinary "homo." Of the same type, only more so, was another bull called *an Donn Cuailgne*, = "the Brown [Bull] of *Cuailgne*," owned by *Daire mac Fachtna*, chief of that mountainous district in Louth. Negotiations culminated in a war between Connacht and Ulster, the catastrophe of which was a meeting of the horned champions. After a noble fight, the Brown picked up the Whitehorned on his horns and ran off with him, in frenzy shaking him all the way and scattering his fragments broadcast. A loin fell at Athlone.



Sketch 24

This war, with all its episodes and side issues, is the theme of that lengthy and complicated Irish prose epic known as *Táin bó Cuailgne*, *i.e.*, "the Driving of the Kine of *Cuailgne*," now *anglice* "Cooley."

Sketch 24.—This pen-drawing, made from one of fifty years ago, shows a square tower or keep having three storeys and a basement, through which, a little to the westward of the vertical centre line, runs a circular-headed archway, and over this again appears a sculptured heraldic shield bearing the city arms. The building of the castle is attributed to John de Gray, Justiciary of Ireland, 1210-13, to whom, or to whose children, we may deem the original town charter to have been assigned.



Sketch 25.

Sketch 25, taken by me in 1894, represents the ten-sided tower said to have formed the ancient citadel; it is called "the Connacht tower," now sole relic of a vanished mass of military buildings. It often housed Queen Elizabeth's ill-starred favourite, the Earl of Essex, and from it are dated many of his letters to his royal mistress.

The town would seem to have been fortified, on both sides of the river, with turrets and gate towers. Together with the connecting bridge, the whole was covered and protected by the castle guns.

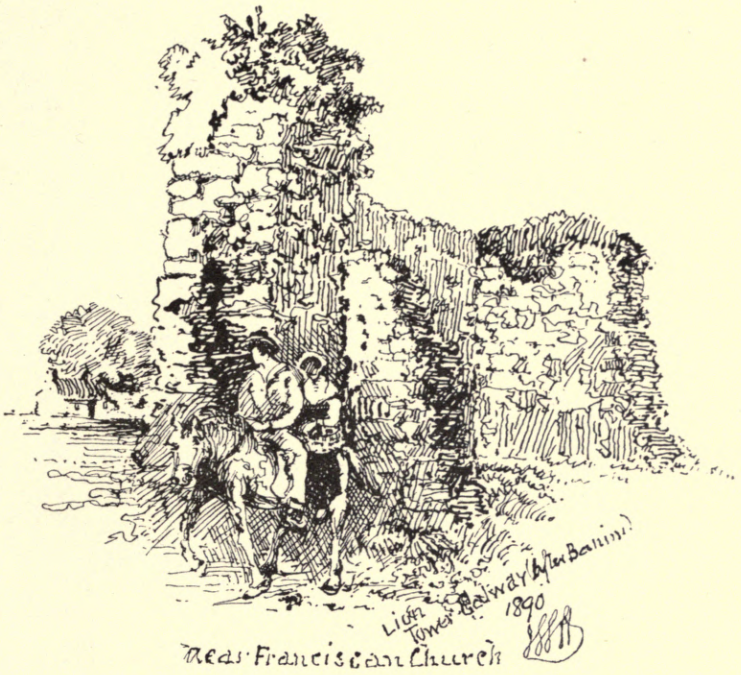
Athlone was the scene of much warfare; its last siege being in 1691, when it was taken by the Williamite army under the Dutch general, Godert de Ginkel, first Earl of Athlone (1630-1703). Again, the town and fortifications suffered severely by an explosion of 260 barrels of gunpowder, stored in the castle, and fired by lightning in the great storm of 1697. It is clear that the result must have been great destruction of the ancient walls and towers; whence the existing works for the most part must date from the storm in question.

XI.—GALWAY.

GALWAY TOWN—in Irish, *cathair na Gaillmhe*, = "the city of the [river] *Gaillimh*"—retains, in ruinous condition, one gateway of its ancient wall fortifications; it is known as "the Blind Arches," and stands in the market place. A map of the town in 1818 shows this gate by the name of "Watergate."

Sketch 26.

Sketch 26.—At that date apparently there still was a considerable extent of the original wall, having gateways as side entrances to the town:—1, Williamsgate; 2, Abbeygate; 3, Westgate; 4, Jail-quay Gate; 5, Parade-quay Gate; and 6, Watergate (see *Sketch 26*), which, with the archway in the town (see *Sketch 27*), represents the only relics of the ancient works.



RUINS OF THE LION WALL TOWER, GALWAY.

Sketch 26 a. To face page 56.

There may be included the few ruins of the Lion Wall Tower (origin of name unknown), situated near Franciscan Convent, Galway.

Sketch 27.

These extensive walls, extant as late as 1818, were soon afterwards almost all demolished in favour of important commercial buildings, the Corporation and the owners falling out on the point of title to the site of the razed walls. In her large work on Ireland, Mrs. S. C. Hall refers to the ruins of a strong tower as then adjoining the ruined arches. When our sketch was made (1894), no fortification was to be seen; but as one of the blind arches (then occupied) had a chamber over it, that possibly may have been the basement of the tower referred to by Mrs. Hall.

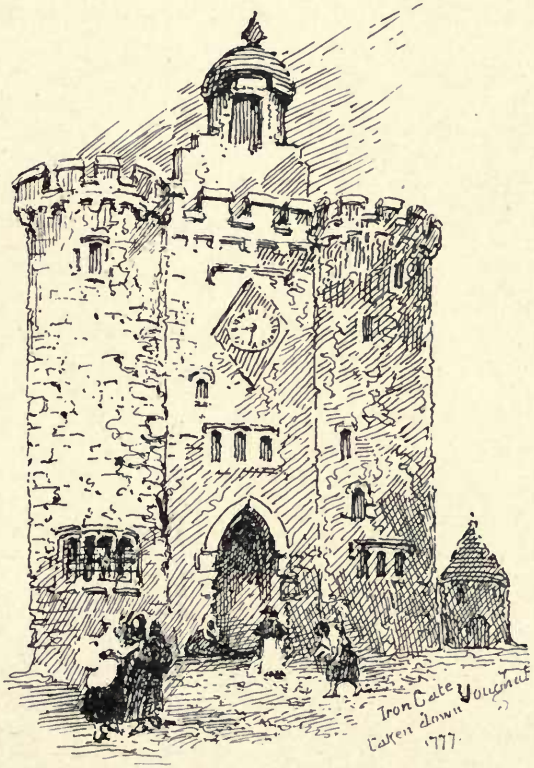
WATERGATE, YOUGHAL.

Sketch 28.

XII.—YOUGHAL.

YOUGHAL—in Irish, *Eochaill*, = "Yew-wood"—a sea-side town in the County Cork, at the mouth of the river Blackwater—in Irish, *Abhainn mhór*, = "Big river," anglicised "Avonmore." In speaking English the former name always is used.

Sketch 28 (Watergate).—It was a walled town previous to the fourteenth century, the wall and its towers having been built in 1275.

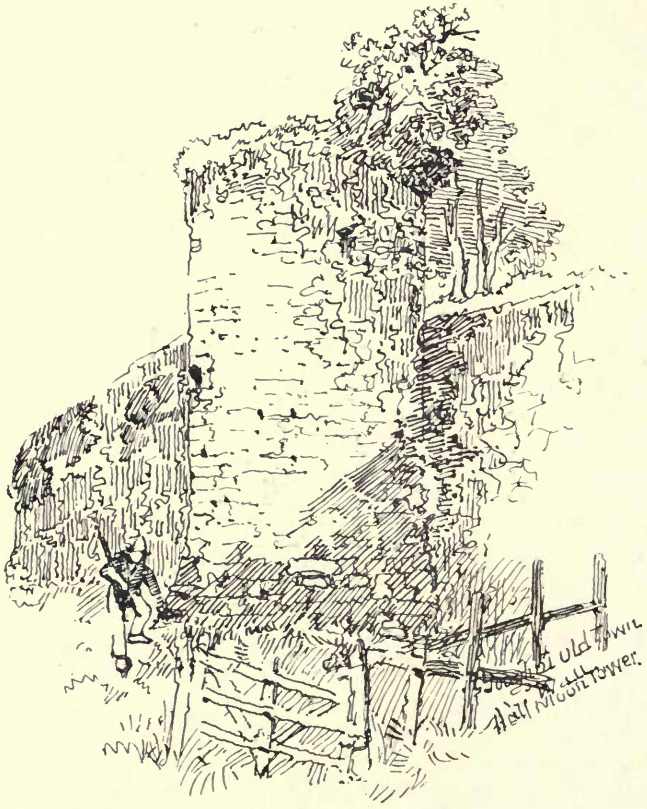


Sketch 29.

These latter were five in number, respectively named "Northgate," "Southgate," "Tinniecastle" or "Irongate" (*Sketch 29*), "Quaygate," and, on the west side of the harbour, "Watergate," above, which still

exist as restored early in 1800. From the comparatively modern character of this last gate, however, it cannot be the identical structure through which, in 1649, Cromwell entered the town; still less can it be coeval with the desperate struggle which, in the Quay Lane in 1595, happened between the insurgents and the Earl of Desmond (James Fitzgerald, sixteenth Earl, called "the Tower Earl," from his sixteen years' captivity in London, and "the Queen's Earl") It is a small and picturesque gateway, designed and built with taste.

The "Tinniecastle" or "Iron Gateway," pulled down in 1777, was replaced by the present tasteless clock-tower, which is an eyesore to architect and artist alike.



Sketch 30.

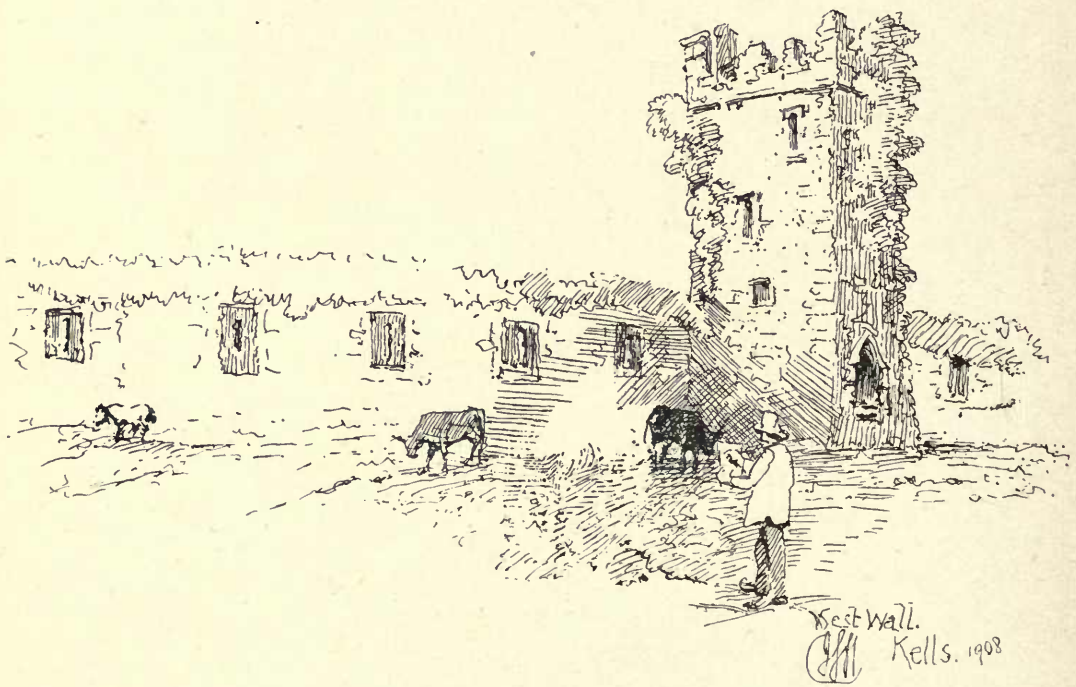
Sketch 30 is of a small wall-tower, with its connecting wall now existing, called the "Half-Moon Tower," and presents no special architectural features.

The town's charter from Edward III., dated January 26, 1374, concedes to the city certain customs for the rebuilding of its walls, these having then "suffered and remained in a dilapidated condition since devastated by our various rebels and enemies;" and on July 4, 1375, another charter, granting certain further privileges to the merchants and community of Youghal, shows that the town then was a thriving commercial port.

Here is preserved the house inhabited by Sir Walter Raleigh while he assisted Lord-Deputy Grey de Wilton to quell the troubles in Munster, 1580-2; and the room is shown in which Sir Walter's servant found him smoking a pipe and, deeming his master to be on fire, promptly heaved a pail of water over him.

XIII.—KELLS.

KELLS, County Kilkenny—in Irish, *Cenannas*, which, according to tradition, equals "Head-residence," as having been of royal foundation. This, however is a doubtful etymology; there is a much more obvious one, but it cannot be discussed here. The old name eventually was supplanted by *Cennlis*, anglice "Kennlis," = "Head-fort," and hence the Marquess of Headfort has his title. "Kenlis" again was degraded to "Kells."



Sketch 31.

It has two gateways, and the original walls, with their towers, are all but entire (see *Sketches 31* and *32*). This unique combination of town, fortress, and ecclesiastical buildings, completely enclosed within a stone wall of considerable height and at intervals strengthened

SOUTH WALL, KELLS.

Sketch 32.

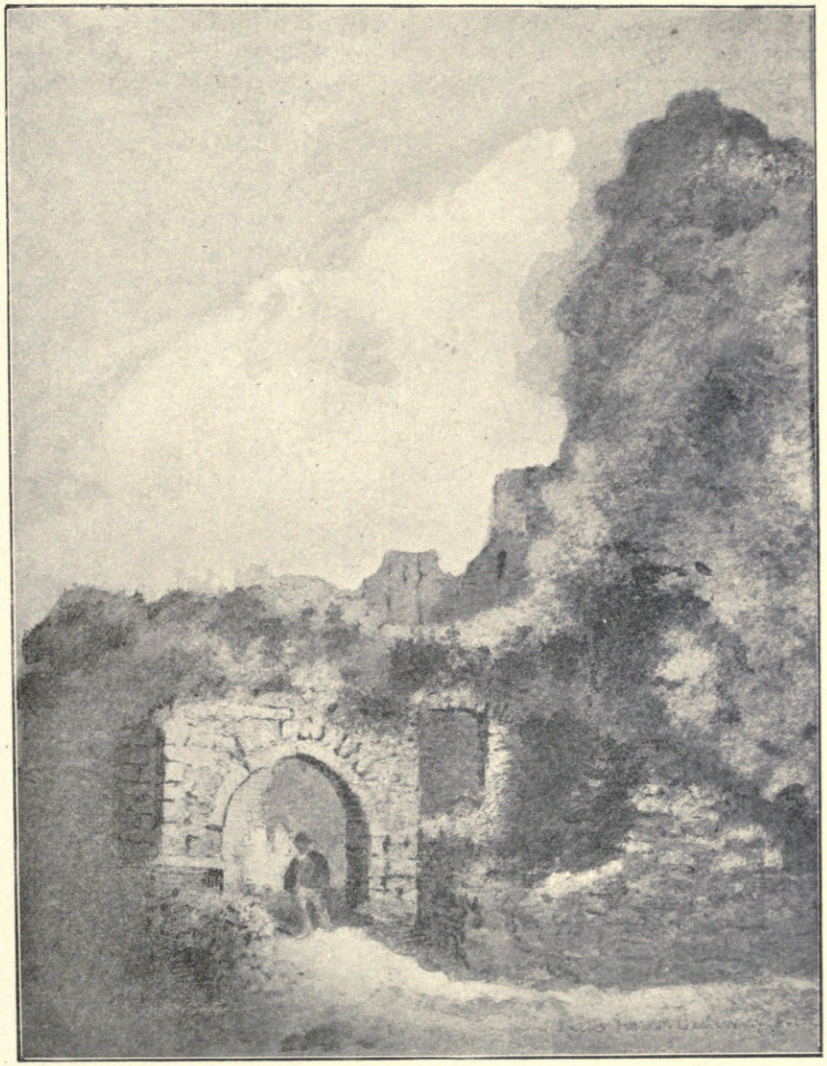
by towers, lies about ten miles from Kilkenny. Its ancient name was "Kenlis in Ossory." Mervyn Archdall (1723-91) describes Kells as having formerly been a walled town. In 1607 Lord William Bermingham burnt it.

The two gateways (*Sketches 33* and *34*) are (1) the main gateway in the surrounding wall, giving access to what was known as "the Burgher's Court," which embraces an irregular area of six hundred by five hundred yards. In this court are the foundations of several demolished dwellings. The sketch is made from the outside (the car-driver resting). It is a simple, circular-headed archway, with the conventional overhanging castellated balcony resting on corbels.

Sketch 33.

GREAT GATEWAY, KELLS.

Sketch 34.



GATE TOWER, KELLS.

Sketch 35.

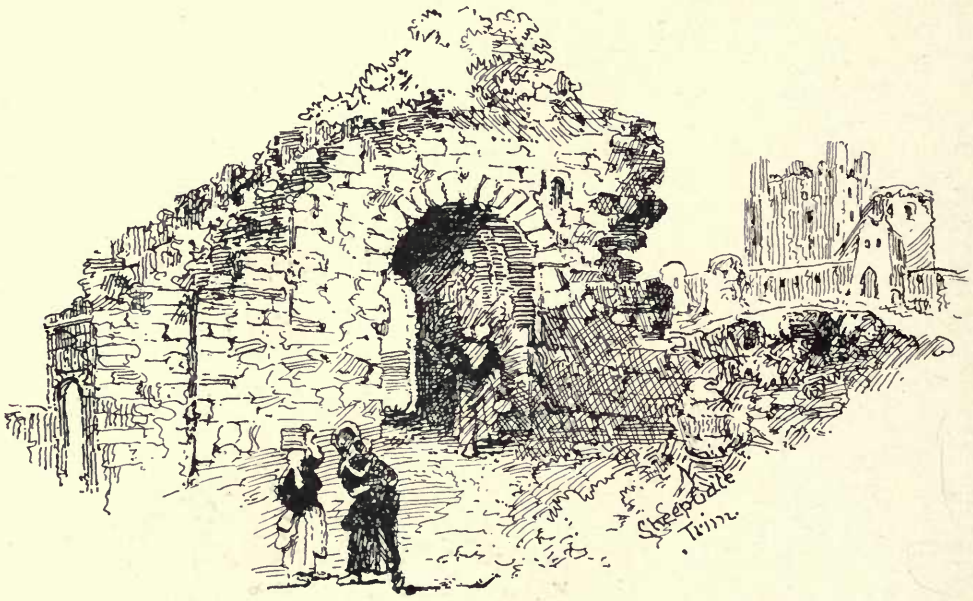
(2) *Sketch 34* is that of the Great Gateway, entered over a low stone bridge of two arches spanning a deep fosse or ditch.

This wall and its ditch, a formidable defence, divide the Burghers' (*i.e.*, the military) Court and the ecclesiastical quarters; which latter comprise the entire equipment of a large abbey, residence of its staff, and annexed burying-ground. The main entrance arch is interesting from its combination of three large curved slabs, strengthened by the usual stone-built supplemental arch over them, and from the extent and height of the existing ivy-covered ruins of its protecting tower—an imposing structure of at least three storeys—showed its importance (*Sketch 35*). Ivy completely hides both form and architectural details, as it does the customary balcony or bastion projection, on corbels, which overlooks and defends this gateway. Either valve of the gate hangs on two neatly-cut and massive projecting stone eyes: an ancient feature.

A charter of Richard II., July 22, 1391, gives licence to acquire lands for erection of the House of the B. V. Mary of Kenlis in Ossory.

XIV.—TRIM.

TRIM—in Irish *Baile átha truim*, = "Town of the Elder-tree ford"—is in the County Meath, on the Boyne river, thirty miles from Dublin and four from the Duke of Wellington's birthplace, Dangan Castle. *Ath truim*, "Elder-ford," is mentioned in the *Tripartite Life of St. Patrick*; in Bury's *Life* of whom it is rendered "Alderford," erroneously.



Sketch 36.

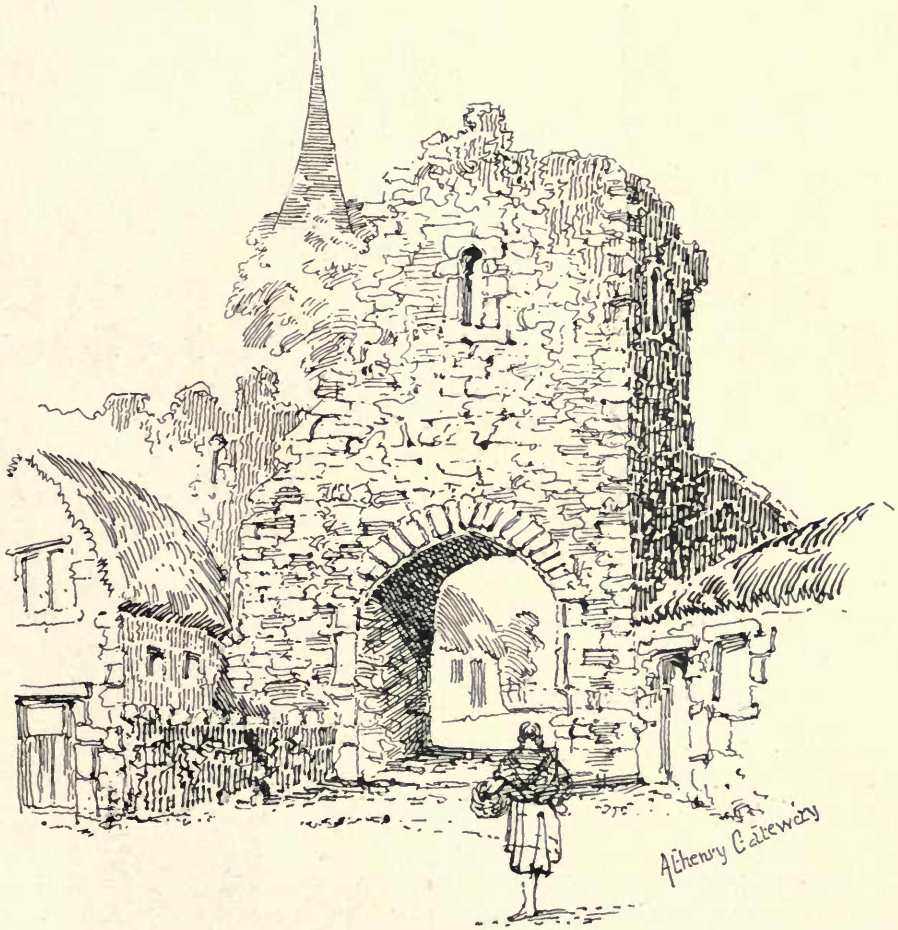
Sketch 36.—This is copied from a minute one of Wakeman's, showing (as it existed in his time) the "Sheep-gate" on the town wall. We have here a small, formal, circular archway running through a square gatehouse, which has a mere fragment of the wall attached. It would seem to have been merely a minor or side-entrance to the town.

A charter of Richard II., October 4, 1393, concedes the town-customs for re-erection, where necessary, of stone fortifications sufficing to check the neighbouring rebellious and malicious enemies.

XV.—ATHENRY.

ATHENRY, twelve miles east of Galway, in same county—in Irish, *Ath na ríogh*, = "the Ford of kings."

This formerly was a walled town of some importance, founded by King John in 1211; to which date also belong its walls, now represented only by the town gateway, shown in our first sketch (*37*), and



Sketch 37.

the circular wall-tower as in the second sketch (*38*), both in good preservation.

Sketch 38 (from pencil sketch, T. Westropp).

In architectural style, the gateway, which at present forms the chief entrance to the town, is almost identical with that of the similar entrance-gate to the town of Kilmallock (*Sketch 18*) and the market-house of Carlingford, the latter of which is called "the Tholsel." These are of a date later than the ancient town-walls, which were

erected by Myler de Bermingham, original grantee of the King in 1241. He also it was that founded the intramural Dominican monastery, bestowing the site and 140 merks.

In fair preservation are the picturesque wall-tower (*Sketch 38*), situated in a clump of trees, and some of the wall itself, near to the ruined Dominican monastery; the tower, however, seems to be too large for a mere wall-tower.

The "Tholsel" above referred to spans the south thoroughfare leading from Carlingford to Greenore. It has been modernised to suit its present purpose of municipal chambers to the mayor and twelve councillors; in which process of conversion much of its pristine character has been lost, the only evidence of antiquity being a small, round-headed window surviving in a remnant of the old wall.

BASTION, DERRY WALL.

Sketch 39.

XVI.—LONDONDERRY.

LONDONDERRY, County Down—in Irish, *doire Chalguigh*, = "Calgach's oak-grove," a name dating from pagan times. Here, in 546, St. Columba built a monastery, and some centuries later the old name was dropped, *doire Choluim chille*, = "Derry [oak-grove] of Columkill." Lastly, James I. [of England], making by charter a grant to a company of London merchants, devised the cockneyfied name of "Londonderry," which, however, never has circulated orally.

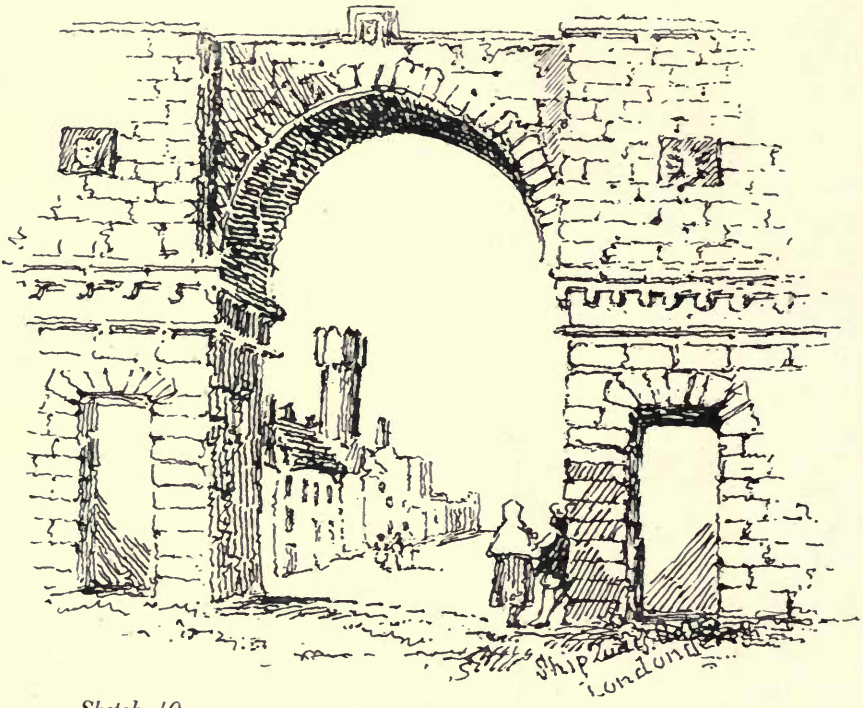
That it originally had walls similar to those of other towns is very probable; but the fortifications existing at the historical siege of 1688 may safely be attributed to the mercantile adventurers above.

The site of Derry by nature is defensive, and in 1628 the city walls were strengthened by addition of seven bastions and a dry ditch ten feet deep. There were four gates:—1, the Bishop's Gate, from which the garrison made sorties; 2, the Ships' Quay Gate; 3, the New Gate, now the Butchers' Gate; 4, the Ferry Port or Ferry Gate, that which "the 'prentice boys of 'Derry" shut, and so started the siege. After this event, two gates were added—the New Gate and the Castle Gate. Of the above gates, 1, 2, 3 were rebuilt between 1805 and 1808, and their style enables us to infer that those which they replaced were certainly not older than King William's day.

There were several bastions also, which gained their names during the siege:—1, the Double Bastion, where the Governor erected gallows, on which he threatened to hang his prisoners should the besiegers persist in driving the peasantry to starve under the walls; 2, the Royal Bastion, flying the red flag of defiance; 3, the Hangman's Bastion; 4, the Gunners' Bastion; 5, the Cowards' Bastion; 6, the Water Bastion; 7, the New-gate Bastion; 8, the Ferry Bastion; 9, the Bishops' Bastion.

Of several guardhouses, as well, whether for single sentinels or for watchmen, which stood upon the wall, only two remain, one of which is shown here as sketched in 1890 (*Sketch 39*).

What with the walls repaired and the three above gateways rebuilt, these two turret-guardhouses offer the only original points having special antiquarian or architectural interest.



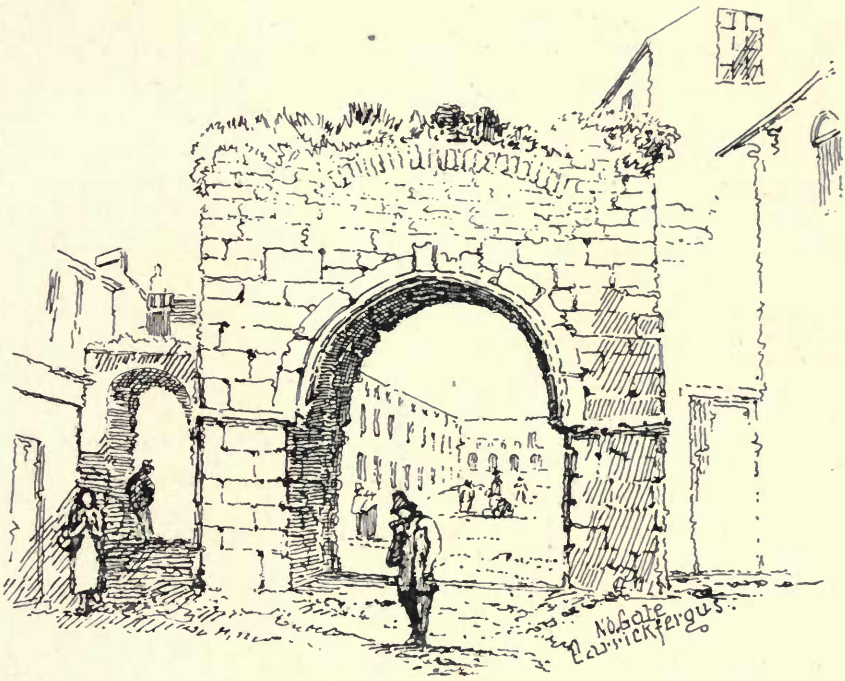
Sketch 40.

The Ships' Quay Gate (*Sketch 40*), already mentioned, is clearly of an eighteenth century type, and may be that which in 1789 was erected as a memorial to William III.

XVII.—CARRICKFERGUS.

CARRICKFERGUS, County Antrim—In Irish, *carraig Fhearghusa*, = "Fergus's rock"—a port on Belfast Lough."

Sketch 41.—This, the North Gate arch, is the sole remnant of the early town-wall fortifications.



Sketch 41.

The town itself, as some say, was founded, and its castle built, by one of the de Lacys in 1230; but this must be an error, for in 1216 Maurice Fitzgerald, an earlier governor, who had built many castles in other parts of the English pale, had issued orders to erect new defences and to strengthen and turret the old ones, which then were but mounds of "sods and turfs with a ditch." So too they remained for about three centuries, for in a map of 1550 the then limited town's only defence appears as little better than a deep ditch.

The occasion of Fitzgerald's building activities was the invasion of Ulster, in 1216, by a Scots army which, at the request of the northern chiefs, Edward Bruce, younger brother of King Robert Bruce, brought over. They penetrated as far as the city of Limerick, but had to retire to Carrickfergus, and in 1217 Edward fell in the Battle of Dundalk, which ended the campaign.

In 1573, the easy capture and subsequent burning of the town by the Irish gave a strong hint as to the unwisdom of neglecting measures of protection. In the next year, accordingly, the mayor and council direct that it be surrounded and secured by a "varmour of sods and turfs" and a trench. Finally, it was only on the instructions of the then governor, Sir Henry Sydney, who recognised the utter inadequacy of any such defences, that a wall of stone and lime replaced the varmour, with addition of a fosse.

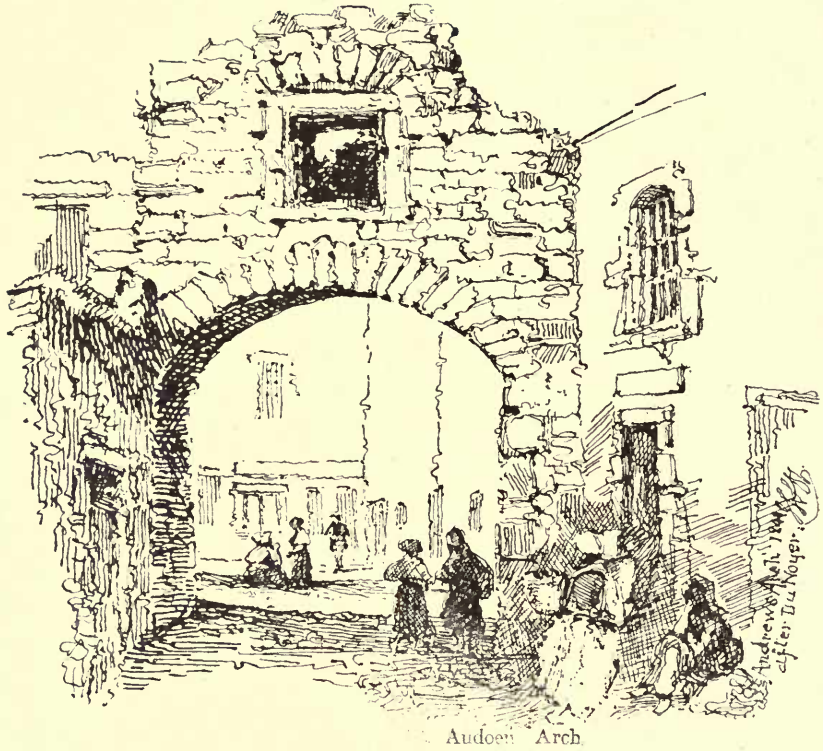
This wall was to be four feet thick and sixteen feet high, and to have seven bastions, each one containing a "house" [chamber] for one sentinel. Subsequently, and during its construction, its thickness was increased to six feet and its height to twenty, with an outer wet ditch and four gates:—1, the Spittal or North Gate, which still exists, as shown here; 2, the Woodburn or West Gate; 3, the Water Gate; 4, the Quay Gate.

Of these, the first two were the most important, and had drawbridges. The North Gate alone survives, and that in mutilated condition, the drawbridge and its appurtenances having been removed and the ditch filled up. Its architecture, as it stands, indicates restoration on a portion of the original basement, as well as of the circular arch, which is surmounted by a supplementary arch over it. All this work is of square, dressed stone, and the gate now is one of the principal entrances to the town.

Carrickfergus, the fortune of which seems to have followed that of its castle, was taken and re-taken in 1642, 1648, 1649, and in 1689 by William III. Its last experience was in October of 1760, when the French naval commandant, Thurot, took it. The garrison of only a hundred and eighty men retired into the castle, and were continuing the defence when Lord Hawke's fleet appeared off the port, and in the naval action which ensued Thurot was killed.

"BROWN'S" CASTLE, DUBLIN WALL.

Sketch 42.



ST. AUDOEN'S ARCH, DUBLIN.

Sketch 42 a. To face page 87.

"St. Audoen's Arch," Dublin, so named from St. Audoen's adjacent Church. Wakeman (1838-1889) has later sketch (walls more ruined), endorsed "1889. Only remaining gateway of ancient Dublin previous to alterations" (erroneously naming it St. Andrew's Arch). The large chamber over it was successively occupied by the Tanners' Hall; *Freeman's Journal* printing room in 1764; and, last, by Hospital of Sisters of St. John.

XVIII.—DUBLIN.

Dublin—in Irish, *Baile átha cliath duibhlinne*, = "Town of the black-pool's hurdle-ford," which, though perfectly well known in all the Gaelic country, is everywhere colloquially shortened to *Blácliath*.

Sketch 42.—Dublin City, when but very limited in area, was protected by a strong wall with a fosse and fifteen castles or turrets. The most formidable of these was Brown's Castle (origin of name unknown), built to command the River Liffey at a point most open to attack. It is gone now, and no vestige marks its place upon the wall; but this can be fixed from an old writer's description of the city wall as in his time running to Ormond Gate, thence to Wormwood Gate, where it stretched upward to New Gate.[1] Between these last two gates, and inside the verge of the Four Courts' Marshalsea, stood a square tower which, from its sign of a Talbot, was called "the Black Dog," but popularly "Brown's Castle."

From above early sketch of it, it would appear to have been a massive square keep of four storeys, with smaller square towers at its angles, in type similar to the keep of Trim Castle, with the four corner turrets rising a few feet from the main battlements; attached is a low wing with battlements and an archway. Although here shown as roofless and falling to ruins, there is yet evidence sufficient to show a formidable castle, requiring a considerable garrison to man its walls.

[1] From the Archives of Dublin, Henry Monansnore in 1200 received from the citizens a grant of the *Western Gate* for a residence, paying a gold bezant "to aid the construction of the King's walls," and similarly Roger of Liminminster pays an ounce of gold for an "espace" over the *New Gate*, the tower of this gate having fallen down, being rebuilt therewith.

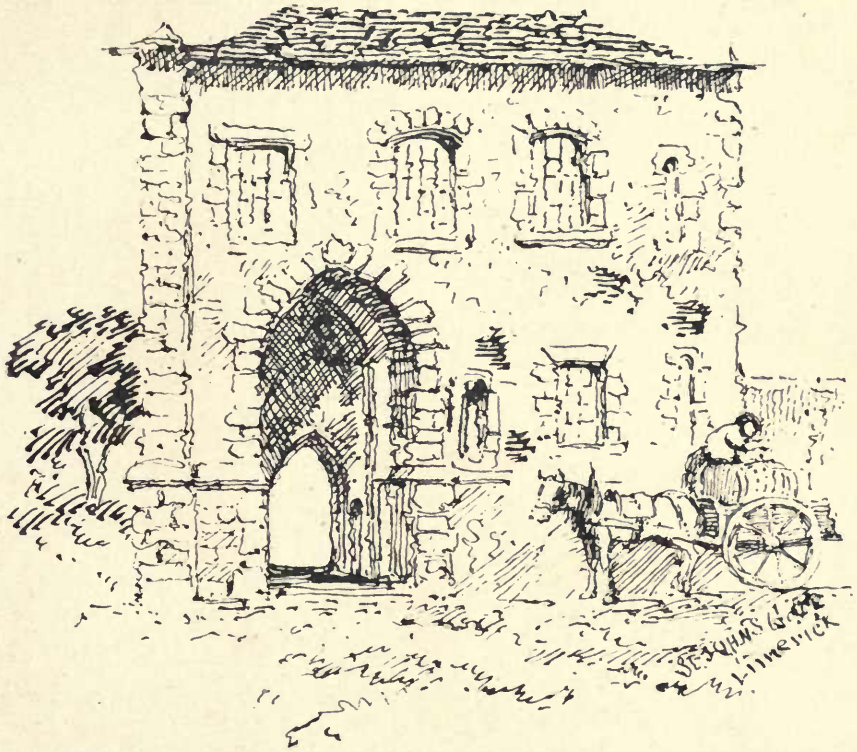
The Tower of *Isolde* at the bridge, held by Geoffrey de Morton (mayor of Dublin) on covenant to keep it in repair, was reclaimed by the citizens for breach of the agreement, and he was also ordained to remove the hall he had built near the tower, on the bridge, as an obstruction to its passage.

XIX.—LIMERICK.

LIMERICK—in Irish, *Luimneach*. This name, which in form is adjectival, originally was that of the estuary of the Shannon, at the head of which the city stands. It is accounted for by two legends of no great interest. As the name of the city, it is said to be an epithet formed from *luimne*, = "a bare spot," itself from *lom*, = "bare," alluding to that site once having been trampled bare by contending hosts. The present "folk-etymology" is that *luimneach* is a colloquialism for *lom na neach*, = "bare spot of the horses," in the same sense as *luimne*.

Sketch 43.

In the suburbs of this important commercial city is a long stretch of wall bearing a small, circular, half-moon turret, and at present forming the boundary wall of a private garden (*Sketch 43*). Its height has been greatly reduced, itself and tower divested of loops and battlements, so that we lack all evidence that here we have a part of the city's massive fortified wall, which, in 1691, so greatly conduced to successful defence by a small force when Limerick was besieged by 10,500 Williamite troops.



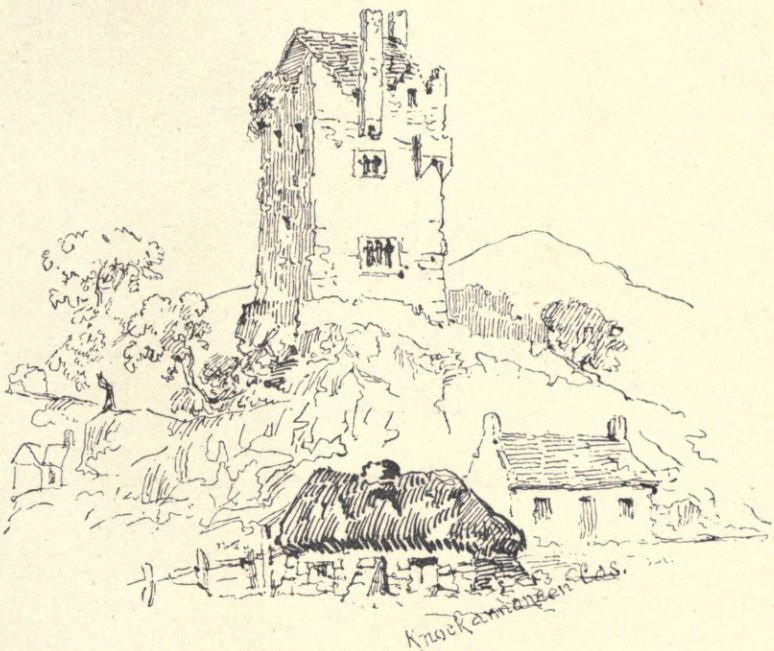
Sketch 44.

The walls surrounding the "Irish Town" division of Limerick bore four gateways or entrances, respectively named East and West Water Gates, Munret Gate, and St. John's Gate, of which last the above is a sketch.[1] It is historically the most interesting of these in consequence

[1] I am indebted for this gateway illustration to Miss Banim's book, *Here and There in Ireland* (*Freeman's Journal*, Limerick, 1891-2).

of the prominent part it had in this and Ireton's siege of Limerick in 1651, and still on its walls retains the evidence of the respective bombardments to which it was then subjected. The proximity of the besieged's famous Black Battery to it also drew upon it the special attention of the artillery of the King in trying to silence the former. It otherwise is specially referred to in the narrative of these sieges.

From its present appearance, a plain two-storey square building with a high pointed archway leading through it, without battlements, and pierced with merely three or four gun loops, it scarcely could have formed a formidable obstacle to the storming of its walls by so large a besieging army, or contribute much to the successful resistance of its besieged garrison during the seventeen days' siege, and the greater honour therefore falls to its defenders and their courageous and resourceful commander, General Sarsfield, the garrison being not only heartened and encouraged, but actively assisted by the female folks in the defence of the breaches, in which bales of cotton were utilized in filling up, so much so that it brought from Dean Storey, the King's chaplain, the admission "that they were foiled by a woman's hand before a battered wall." One can well believe, from examination of the remains, their inadequacy, and justified the warning of its French Governor-General, Bosseleau, who gave as his reason for deserting the town on the approach of the King's army, "that it was unnecessary to bring artillery to take the town, as its walls could be breached with a few roasted apples."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